

Femme Mirror

Spring 1990



A Few Words From the

EDITOR

Jeanette [REDACTED]



“Did You Ever Know That You’re My Hero?”

Recently I had the pleasure of telling my son the story of the Alamo. Texas fathers count the days until their children come to that age when they can appreciate the glory of the heroic men who fought and died to win the freedom we Texans hold so dear.

I told him how 186 men accepted a challenge they knew was insurmountable. Many of these men were not Texicans but rather men who were willing to sacrifice their lives for a greater good. We spoke of heroes like Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie, and William Travis.

It has been said that when it comes to bragging, you can always tell a Texan...you just can't tell him much. I felt a real sense of renewal bragging to my son about that small band of brave men who sacrificed all to win freedom for the new nation of Texas.

Later that evening my thoughts turned to another struggle for freedom in this one Texan's life. As a crossdresser, whom can I thank for the freedom (limited as it may be) to venture out into public with little fear of arrest or harassment? Who are my heroes?

I can thank Virginia Prince for helping organize crossdressers so they can discover they were not the only "nut" in the world. I can thank her for helping educate professional counselors and educators about the phenomenon of crossdressing.

I can thank men like Benjamin, Green, Bullock, and Docter for helping us discover our similarities and uniqueness. Thanks can also go to members of the media such as Abby, Donahue, and Geraldo.

These are minor players in comparison to one group of persons who have done the most to allow you and me

to enjoy a certain amount of freedom.

These persons have been chastised, abused, injured and even killed to win a freedom we now enjoy. These persons are gay.

While gays did not march, protest, shock, infuriate and educate the public to benefit crossdressers--we have directly benefited. They battled in the open while most of us hid in the closet. They struggled and we scurried for cover. They bled and we benefited.

Gays forced society to build internal shock absorbers in their prejudices. They rattled the cages of social ignorance and prejudice until the door opened a bit. The gays marched through that door defiant and proud. Crossdressers waited for an opening and then dashed through the same door.

While the war was raging, we followed the best advice the military offers-- we kept our heads down and covered our butts. Some of us even ridiculed those "fags" and "queers" so society would not make the mistake of aligning our male selves with that bunch of "freaks".

There are wounds to be healed. There is a tension between crossdressers and the gay community that should not be there. We are still ignorant of one another. We have more in common than either group is willing to recognize. Society will never fully accept either group. There will always be a social stigma in loving the "wrong" sex or wearing the "wrong" clothes.

A gay friend recently explained that the gay community shun s men in "drag" because of the

Continued.....

reputation of the gay drag queens. He said that drag queens are labeled "bad news" in the gay community. He said they are known as liars, thieves, prostitutes, and drug addicts. Crossdressers are seen in this same light. Education is needed.

I have listened to crossdressers espouse ignorance concerning gays. We can become very moralistic. Many of us fear gays because we feel like prey. A crossdresser may be hit upon by a gay man in a bar (much like a genetic female might be approached in a straight bar) but a simple explanation of your sexual orientation will usually be enough to halt any advances. In this respect gay men give up much easier than a heterosexual male on the prowl for a woman. Straight men are much more persistent and obnoxious. Again, education is needed.

For many crossdressers the first step out into public is to a gay bar. We feel safer and more accepted than testing the waters of "straight America". We practice the look, the walk, and the talk among a group less likely to do us physical harm.

Later we try the straight world--a short trip to a convenience store or to the mall. We are thrilled beyond belief that we "pass". In reality we pass about as well as John Elway in a Super Bowl. One of four things happen when a crossdresser "passes". Either:

1. She is a rare individual of the right size, style and demeanor who has practiced and perfected her abilities for years; or

2. The general public is too busy with their own concerns to pay attention to whatever others might be wearing or doing. As long as a prolonged direct encounter is avoided, the public doesn't care; or

3. She is read but the public figures anyone crazy enough to dress like that and go in public might have an Uzi in her purse and using hand grenades for breast forms; or

4. Most likely, society is too polite to cause a scene--live and let live. Thank the gays for this. We crossdressers owe a great debt to the gay community. As more of us take that first step out of the closet and others become more bold, we can be grateful to those who provided the greatest help. As we grow, remember--

"I can fly higher than an eagle,
But you are the wind beneath my wings".



... SO WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS LATE?

One year has passed since Tau Chi took over the responsibility for publishing *The Femme Mirror*. From the beginning, the staff made a solemn promise to produce an issue every three months. Well, we tried our best, but we fell a little short. It has taken us 14 months to produce four issues.

There are several reasons why we failed to meet our goal of one issue per quarter:

1. At the beginning we didn't know what we were doing. We had to locate a printer, find all of the past materials submitted by our members, and then write, edit, lay-out, print, and distribute the first issue.

2. We decided to adjust the schedule as to when each issue would be published. As the Holiday En Femme is our biggest event of the year, we delayed the last issue so the news from the Holiday would still be relatively fresh. In the future the Winter issue will be published just after the Holiday with other issues coming each three months.

3. The biggest reason is you, our members. You are the writers, artists, cartoonists, photographers, and reporters. We are not receiving enough materials from our creative staff throughout the country. We have had to wait until we have enough materials to produce a worthwhile issue. I said at the outset that we would publish every 3 months even if the issue was only four pages. That was a good bluff but hard to enforce when you consider the cost of printing and mailing. **We will not waste Tri Ess money to publish a paltry issue just to meet a time goal.**

So here is the bottom line, dear sisters. Mail us materials to be considered for publication or sit on your pretty hands and wait on others. **The next issue will arrive as soon as we have enough materials. You are in control....so when will it be?**

Ed Note: Doctor Doctor is well known among Crossdressers. This is the first of a series of articles he has promised to provide for publication in the Femme Mirror. He has published a book entitled: Transvestites and Transsexuals: Toward a Theory of Cross-Gender Behavior. It can be ordered through IFGE, PO 367 Wayland, MA 01778 for \$37.50.

Gender Envy and Dependency Needs

by
Richard Doctor, PhD

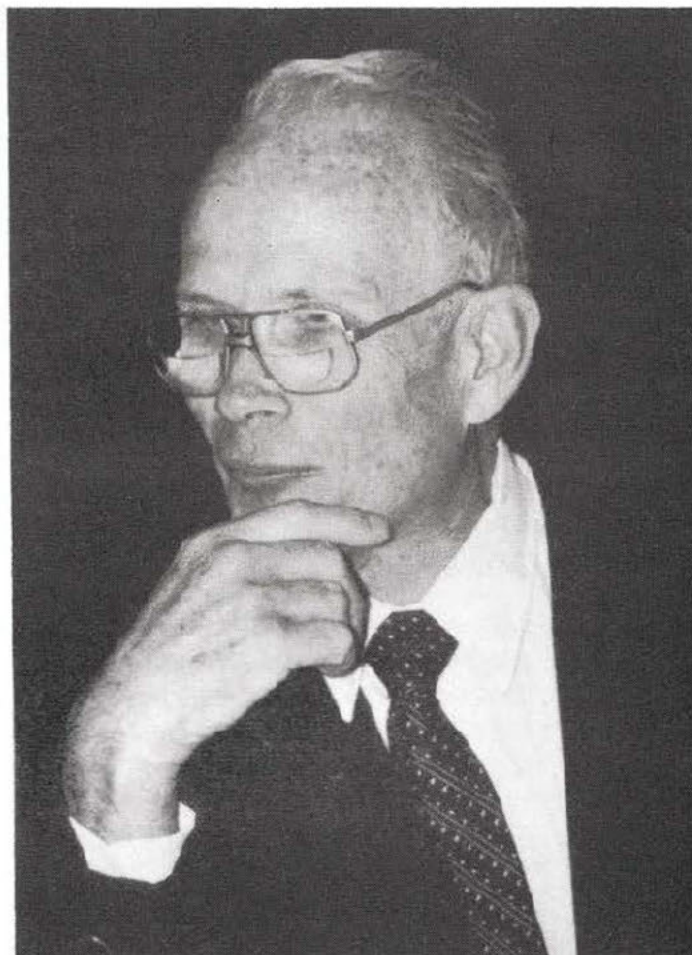
One of the most familiar fantasies of crossdressers is the idea life could be a lot better if only you could be beautiful and admired, and this would be much easier to arrange if you were a girl. Some have called this gender envy, but I believe the story is actually much more closely related to the theme of dependency. I believe it is dependency feelings which are at the heart of feeling gender envy, and the deeper the dependency motives, the more intense the gender envy.

Let's define gender envy as a set of beliefs, expectancies, and longings dealing with many alleged advantages of being a woman. When we speak of envy, then, we are talking about attitudes, values, images and fantasies, all of which have developed through social learning experiences. These experiences, from earliest childhood, have led many crossdressers to conclude women do indeed have it better than men.

Perhaps, it is imperative to have a well established sense of masculine gender identity before you can begin to feel envy of women. The point is simply: we need to know who we are before we can see the advantages of being someone else.

There are all sorts of opportunities for boys to feel that girls are receiving different treatment from parents and peers alike. Virginia Prince has noted in many of her articles how sex role socialization in our culture is immensely different for boys and girls. Boys are expected to do all sorts of things more independently than girls. Boys are most certainly expected to take a leadership role in dating. Even more demanding is the leadership and risk-taking associated with sexual behavior. And it is usually the male who is more at risk. He is supposed to make advances according to some sort of assertiveness schedule. This is supposed to be roughly in line with how well the people know each other and the circumstances of their relationship. But taking sexual initiative puts the guy in a very vulnerable spot. If he is pushed away as "too

demanding" there is the risk of humiliation and possible loss of the relationship. But if he is too timid he runs the risk of appearing disinterested. All of this produces anxiety, uncertainty about what to do and when to do it. For some crossdressers the price is lack of confidence and lack of growing skills in dating.



But what does this have to do with the formation of gender envy? The point is simple: some males may deal with this anxiety by mentally putting themselves in the place of the woman. They say to themselves: If I were a girl in this situation I would have no problem at all. The guy would have to make the advances. I would have all the power and control. I could say yes or no. I could avoid any possibility of humiliation or rejection if only I could be the girl instead of the guy. While there are many roots of gender envy, this simple example, which obviously is not going to apply to everyone, points up how putting yourself into the fantasy role of a woman could feel more comfortable than having to actually carry out the sexual role of a man.

But there are two deep themes in human development which are even more important in the gender envy story. These are the universal needs for love and protection.

Guilt vs. Shame

by Virginia Prince

The other day on public television I caught part of a lecture by a man named Bradshaw. He was going on at some length about shame and the effect it had on individuals and families. He pointed out that a shame trapped family passes on its shame generation after generation because, he pointed out, while GUILT is about doing, SHAME is about being. Thus a family in which shame is part of the family philosophy passes it on to the children. Because the parents' sense of "beingness" is damaged, this is unconsciously passed on to the children and their "beingness" is affected too.

Now this use of "being" and "doing" has an interesting relationship to my statement,

**"Women Just Are;
Men Are Always Trying to Become!"**

I have pointed this out in my upcoming book and in many lectures: that little girls get ego strokes just by being little girls, whereas boys only get stroked when they have done something. So by putting these two concepts together it can be easily understood that you can feel guilt about some mistake you have made, something you have done wrong. You can rectify this situation by an apology or by never doing what you feel guilty about again. On the other hand, if you don't feel you are worthy or there is something wrong with your beingness, you can feel shame. But shame is pretty hard to overcome because if there really is something wrong with your being, it is hard to change. And, as long as it remains unchanged, the shame continues.

**GUILT IS ABOUT DOING;
SHAME IS ABOUT BEING**

Bradshaw's statement has a lot of significance for our culture. You hear the word GUILT widely used in our culture to describe the feelings one has about what one is doing. We don't hear SHAME being used as much, yet in view of the above I suspect it is a more appropriate word than we might think. We have a negative feeling about ourselves (in the beginning, at least, until we learn to accept ourselves as we are) and it is in this sense: "There must be something wrong with me because I want to dress up like a girl." This is a "being" emotion, not just a sense of making a mistake or of doing something wrong. Thus the

feeling about it is one of shame.

There is another implication of this interesting idea. If you are simply doing something wrong you can be induced to stop doing it and thus can be "cured" of the misbehavior. But if it is part of your beingness that is wrong, it can't be cured because it is indeed part of you. This puts a whole new light on the psychology of the behavior.

Furthermore, I have long pointed out that there is an interesting difference between having and being. Men speak of "having" a wife, or of "having" a woman in a sexual sense. This means to possess or own or control her, in a legal sense if she is a wife, but definitely of owning and using her, even if it is only a temporary thing. The verb "to have" is an action word, which is to say, a doing word. It means something quite different from "being." Thus many men "have" a woman either in the wifely or the sexual sense, but only the crossdresser has the experience of being a woman (or at least trying to).

This concept leads to a further interesting generalization:

SEX IS BEING; GENDER IS DOING!

This makes the distinction between Sex and Gender, which I have been harping on for 25 years, even clearer and more important. Your anatomy and physiology (i.e., your sex) are part of your beingness; gender is what you do (i.e., the way you live your life).

Therefore, if you are a crossdresser you are a male, not merely as a result of possessing male genitalia but throughout your whole bodily organization. Chromosomally you are an "XY" individual, your body operates under the effects of testosterone, the male hormone, and your basic mental programs are those characteristic of male animals. Obviously the reverse is true of females. Now you can eliminate one of these factors by sex changing surgery, which deprives you of your male genitals but does not give you female genitals in exchange. Merely constructing an orifice between your legs does not make you a female because the most fundamental and defining female organs you don't have; namely, ovaries, tubes and uterus. You have become a modified male but not a female in the biological sense. You can minimize the hormonal manifestations of your maleness by loading up with female hormones, estrogen and progesterone, but if

brought you up, that gets into a conflict with your basic awareness of your self. And it is again your conscious mind that says, "You ought to be ashamed of yourself for having such ideas;" i.e., for being such a person.

Now getting over that shame reaction is not easy. It requires your doing a little deep level research on yourself. Your rational mind, not your socially programmed mind, needs to examine why you want to do such a thing and what satisfaction you get out of doing it. But don't be satisfied with superficial explanations such as, "Well, it feels so good," or, "I feel so relaxed," and many others. Those are true but they are the results of the behavior, not the cause of it. You have to go deeper. You have to come to realize and to accept that what you are dealing with here is the totality of what it means to be a human and to act as one. When you can dig that, you are in a position to realize that the divisions of the condition of humanness into manliness and womanliness (or, if you wish, masculinity and femininity) are arbitrary in a given society. Moreover, they are, to a considerable degree, unnecessary in today's world and society. They are constricting, limiting, depriving, and damaging to the total humanity of the individual, and therefore to the society in which he lives.

Once you have accepted that, you are in a position to do something about your shame. What you must do is become aware that crossdressing is a means to an end, not an end in itself. Secondly, it is not a problem, it is a solution to a problem. With that under your belt you ask, "If that is so, then what IS the problem?" And the answer is that there is no problem within you, the problem is with other people; that is, society in general. Good sense tells you that you should not flaunt your dressing in the face of those who don't understand, so you are cautious. But the point is that by this time you should realize that dressing is not a matter of some deficit in your BEINGNESS. It is simply a

conflict between your sense of your total self and society's total disregard for your total self. Now this conflict can have serious repercussions, of course. If you do something foolish and get in trouble for it, you are GUILTY of doing so-and-so and you can smart up and not do it again. But there is no need to feel SHAME! You are not some kind of inadequate person, so what is there to be ashamed of? You are simply a person who, after deep consideration, has come to an understanding of what masculinity and femininity really are, simply the two halves of humanity. And since you are human you are entitled to both halves of your own total self.

With that understanding comes the possibility of the development of a degree of pride in your own realization of that totality and the guts to bring it out in the open. You could develop pride in place of shame and use simple common sense to avoid guilt. So from here on you can enjoy--

GENDER EUPHORIA!

HAVE A GOOD LIFE!

-Virginia Prince

VIDEO!

For those who were in San Francisco and want to savor the memories, or those who couldn't make it, the 1989 Holiday En Femme video is a lighthearted look at the best Tri-Ess convention ever! Our investigative reporter (Not Connie Chung) takes an in-depth look at what the excitement was all about. Don't miss it!

SIXTY MINUTES, MORE OR LESS

The 1989 Holiday En Femme
running time: 1:40:30 \$25.00

CROSSDRESSING AND RELIGION:

Some Religious, Moral, and Ethical Considerations. A Conversation with Father Jack Ray. Running time: 20:05 \$10.00

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Tri-ESS SORORITY FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 1989

STARTING BALANCES:

SECURITY PACIFIC CHECKING ACCOUNT:	4,116.30
FRANKLIN MONEY FUND	1,073.62
FRANKLIN GOV'T. SECURITIES FUND	5,316.35
INTEREST EARNED	527.02
DUES PAID IN	<u>26,322.64</u>
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR YEAR	37,356.33

EXPENSES:

PRINTING	17,304.36
POSTAGE	1,889.88
MEMBERSHIP OFFICE (DONNA)	2,071.67
TULARE OFFICE RENT (CAROL)	1,200.00
CHAPTER COORDINATION (MARLENE)	853.75
PHONE	538.74
OFFICE SUPPLIES	243.50
LEGAL EXPENSES	100.00
STATE FEES, BANK CHARGES	<u>25.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	24,227.40

ENDING BALANCES:

SECURITY PACIFIC CHECKING ACCOUNT	6,550.02
FRANKLIN MONEY FUND	6,519.45
FRANKLIN GOV'T. SECURITIES	<u>59.45</u>
TOTAL ON HAND 12/31/89	13,128.95

NOTES: The expense of printing includes the Clarion, the Femme Mirror and the Directory plus miscellaneous forms, envelopes, etc.

The expense of postage is that originating in Carol's office in Tulare. It does NOT include postage advanced and refunded to Marlene in the Chapter Coordination Office, nor that of Donna in the Membership Office. Much of their expense is postage and some printing of forms, etc. It did not seem worthwhile to break down each office's expenses. Office rental expense is \$100.00 per month to Carol for use of part of her own office facilities.

The fact that there is a relatively larger Starting Fund Balance is due to both the fact that we raised the dues \$5.00 and that Donna's plan for collection of dues brings in a lot of money at the end of the year. It may be interesting to point out that the starting balances for previous years were:

1987	5,320	1988	9,043	1989	10,586	1990	13,128
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This shows a steady increase in working capital due to increased membership and to the steady increase in dues which came into force in 1989. I have in the past put our excess funds in a Gov't. Securities Fund, but interest rates have dropped so that it earns less than the Money Fund. Temporarily most of the money is in the Money Fund, where it can be withdrawn by check. However, I am going to transfer a large part of it to the Franklin Options Fund, which has been paying 13% or more for a number of years. I have my own money in this fund.

Respectfully submitted by Virginia Prince, Comptroller

How to Tell Your Wife: A Manual for Love

An Essay by Jane Ellen [REDACTED]

"How can I muster the courage to tell my wife about my crossdressing? Will she reject me, or even leave me?" These questions trouble many femmiphiles. In communicating with their wives, crossdressers use a variety of methods. How a crossdresser informs his wife directly influences the wife's response to his "woman within". Based on observed patterns of wifely response, several suggestions come to mind. Naturally, no one approach can be guaranteed to work for any given couple. My suggestions will read like a Manual for Love.

Should a femmiphile tell his wife about his crossdressing? Almost always! Revealing his feminine side shows a belief in the sacred trust that is the basis of marriage. The decision to hide his femininity entails a willingness either to submerge the "woman within" or to spend much time and energy deceiving those he loves. Submerging the feminine self, moreover, simply does not work. Mounting frustration leads to subconscious resentments, which are dumped on the unsuspecting wife in the form of unrelated quarrels. This suffering hardly seems fair to the wife, who was given no chance to understand or accept. Thus the femmiphile may precipitate the very divorce he fears. It is true that informing a wife will occasionally lead to divorce. But if so, the marriage was usually in poor shape anyway. Ralph Waldo Emerson's concept of a friend was "someone with whom I can be sincere." The crossdresser's wife must be his friend.

Before sharing his feminine side with his wife, the crossdresser should have a reasonable insight into his own feminine self. Such insight may be gained by studying the works of such researchers as Drs. Vern Bullough, Richard Docter, Roger Peo, Virginia Prince and Peggy Rudd. Publications such the Femme Mirror and Tapestry are excellent sources of information.

The crossdresser should take care to avoid certain approaches that have resulted in much grief. A wife's response is largely determined by how she learns about her husband's crossdressing. Most wives respect honesty; indeed, they are entitled to it. Some femmiphiles feel it less threatening to understate their crossdressing as a mere "hobby". Perhaps it may seem so over the short term, but wives later feel deceived when feminine traits emerge that transcend the "hobby" concept. Other crossdressers simply allow their wives to discover their feminine clothes. The natural wifely reaction to this copout is to feel betrayed by her husband's "unfaithfulness". When the

wife discovers that the "other woman" is really he, she feels made to appear a fool. And guess who will be the target of her resulting anger!

As crossdressers we should stress one central fact: We are more than our clothes! Far more important than the clothing is the fact that we are males who have been fortunate enough to discover a softer, feminine side to our personalities. Crossdressing, then, is simply a means of self-expression. Deep down, most women dislike the "macho" standards under which males in our society are raised. Women tend to be sensitive and empathic, and appreciate these traits in men. They appreciate the concept of expressing mood and self-image in what they wear. At various times, they may feel "pretty" or "sporty" or "sexy" or "outdoorsy" or "elegant", and dress accordingly. Surely it is logical for them to reject the double standard that denies men this freedom of expression.

The crossdresser should present his "woman within" as a positive asset. For she is! Feelings of guilt, placed on crossdressers by an ignorant, hostile society, have little place in the vital process of communication between the crossdresser and his wife. How can the crossdresser possibly ask his wife to encourage "her" when he himself has trouble accepting "her"? Before revealing his feminine side to his wife, he should take note of the differences "she" has made in his life. Has "she" made him more careful of his appearance? More free to express his emotions? More sensitive and empathic? More understanding of his wife's feelings and needs? More aware of color and beauty? Has he developed new interests and skills? Has he grown closer to God? As the crossdresser shares these assets with his wife, she will realize that her husband is still the same dear person she fell in love with and married. He has only grown.

Communication with our wives should be an exercise in empathy. Always we should strive to put ourselves in our wives' place. Fears of homosexuality or transsexuality should be dealt with honestly - as soon as possible. Concerns about children, profession, and eventual goals should be explored together. Our wives are our partners. Regardless of our desires, our wives and families will have to bear the social cruelty that can come with having a crossdressing husband and father. Many wives, moreover, will be troubled by inner conflicts that are every bit as important as our own. Most of them did not ask to be placed into this maelstrom. It is our sacred duty to communicate with our wives, to make decisions with them, and to understand them.

Sharing our feminine side with our wives does not end with mere words. As we live our femininity, sharing continues. Rather than try to outshine our

wives, we should grow with them in the feminine experience. Of course, there are some things such as menstrual cramps, childbirth, and breast feeding that we can share only vicariously. The best we can do about these biological functions is to respond in love. Unless we live full time enfemme, we may never know wage discrimination. But we can join our sisters in fighting it wherever it exists. Being a crossdresser entails some sacrifice. We must avoid retreating into a macho double standard. Nothing seems to disgust wives more than a "man in a dress". Much more important than perfecting feminine mannerisms is developing a lively appreciation for beauty in nature, art, music, and literature, and, yes, those very feminine skills of cooking, sewing, interior decorating, housecleaning, and grocery shopping. Our wives will be much more encouraging if they perceive that we are willing to buy, as far as is possible, the whole feminine package.

Finally, we should remember that our wives need us as men. Everyone has heard the tired refrain of rejecting wives: "I married a man!" So many times it has been used to imprison men in society's masculine straitjacket. Yet it has a modicum of validity. We, who are more secure than average in our masculinity, should provide the masculine strength our wives need from us. That includes letting them, as far as they can, participate in the masculine side of our lives. It means being considerate husbands and devoted fathers. If we fulfill well our roles as husbands, our wives will grow more comfortable with us as sisters.

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FLASH

Dr. Peggy Rudd of Tau Chi Chapter is researching material to write another book. She plans to call it "Crossdressing with Dignity".

If you have not been contacted to get a copy of the survey she is asking crossdressers to complete, please write to her in care of Tau Chi Chapter, PO Box 1105, Alief, Texas 77411-1105.

Dr. Peggy's first book, "My Husband Wears My Clothes", continues to gain popularity. If you've not gotten a copy, you can contact her directly or get one from the Tri Ess office, PO Box 194, Tulare, CA. 93275. It's well worth the effort.

A Letter From A Wife

Dear Jeanette:

I enjoyed reading Jane Teske's A Real Eye Opener for Jane. As a crossdresser's wife, I empathized with her story. As she pointed out, it isn't always easy to be married to a crossdresser. Such a relationship can't work unless there is love, understanding, openness and honesty. The openness and honesty can be risky business, but it's the only way to avoid "crazymaking" (holding grudges). The needs of both partners must be expressed, not more of one at the expense of the other.

Pearl [redacted] puts it so well: "What makes a marriage happy?...The answer is to be found, I think, in the mutual discovery, by two who marry, of the deepest need of the other's personality, and the satisfaction of that need. The satisfaction must, of course, be mutual. A happy marriage cannot be built upon sacrifice. Nor even upon willingness. It must be built upon joy."

I feel blessed to have a wonderful marriage - a sound one for both of us. We are lovers and best friends. We find that his femme self adds a dimension, even an exhilaration to our lives. However, we had to work hard to get where we are - (the first few years were awful!) - and we know that we always shall. But with love and courage and responsiveness to the other's needs, it can be done.

Sincerely,

Julie

Our Cover

In recognition of Tri-Ess' commitment to wives and families of crossdressers, our Spring 1990 cover features not one but two lovely ladies: our co-founder and Executive Director Carol Beecroft and her wife Norma.

-Photo by Mariette Pathy Allen

Beverly's Not So Excellent Adventure

Beverly [REDACTED], Vancouver, BC

After six fabulous days dressed as a woman in San Francisco, it was time for me to head home to Canada.

Still dressed as Beverly, I drove up Interstate 5, stopping for coffee, gas and motel rooms as necessary. I must say my six days' experience in San Francisco made this part fun and not at all apprehensive for me.

I was about thirty miles south of Salem, Oregon. I had just passed the Albany exit when I noticed my gas gauge was registering empty. I crossed my fingers and continued on. What else could a lady do? Not a minute passed until my car started to sputter so I moved over to the shoulder and came to a stop.

"Well, Beverly, you got us into this mess, so it's up to you to get us out of it."

I clasped my hands over my head and thought: "Well Beverly, you got us into this mess, so it's up to you to get us out of it." I sat for a few minutes pondering my predicament. Then I got out of the car and started walking down the road. I hadn't gone far when I noticed a farmhouse across the field. I had no alternative but to head that way. I started down into the ditch which looked quite grassy from afar. Soon my four inch white heels were sunk down in the mud. Finally out of the ditch, I came to a barbed wire fence. First I gingerly touched the wire and found there was no electricity running through it. So I hiked up my skirt and proceeded to climb over, but not before my slip got caught on a barb and I was stuck. Desperately I tugged but to no avail. Finally, I just yanked and my slip came away, in shreds. My nylons came to a similar demise when I cleared the next obstacle: blackberry bushes. Finally, I arrived at the farmhouse.

***"State Patrol?" I sputtered.
"Can't you call a gas station?
I'd much rather you called a
gas station."***

A lady answered my knock. After I explained my predicament to her she said: "Not to worry, dear. I'll call the State Patrol and they'll get gas to you, and you'll be on your way in no time."

"State Patrol?" I sputtered. "Can't you call a gas

station? I'd much rather you called a gas station."

"Oh, no," she answered. "They won't come out, but don't worry. I'll take care of it."

I thanked her and headed back to my car.

I hadn't been back to the car long when a sporty Mustang pulled up behind me. I swear, ladies, the State Trooper who stepped out of that little car was seven feet tall and three feet wide. I know ladies don't sweat but the drops on my forehead were not mere perspiration!

"What seems to be the problem, Ma'am?" he drawled.

"Oh, I seem to have run out of gas," I answered.

"Well," he said, "this car doesn't carry a pump, so I'll just call the other fellows. They're equipped for this kind of thing."

"Oh Please God!" I thought to myself. "Not another couple of police officers!!!"

"Oh Please God!" I thought to myself. "Not another couple of police officers!!!"

A short time later another car drove up. Within a few minutes, the officer returned to my window and told me to try to start my car. After a few tries, the car sputtered to life, much to my relief.

"Ok, lady," the officer said. "Follow us down the highway about two miles. We'll swing off to the right then under the highway. We'll take you back to Albany and make sure you get to the gas station all right."

"Thank you so much," I said, and grinned all the way to the gas station thinking how great it felt that I had pulled off this caper without anyone being the wiser to my true identity.

Beverly [REDACTED] FCBC-2280-R

Executive Director's Page

Carol Beecroft, Executive Director, Tri-Ess

We're getting ready for a new edition of the National Membership Directory. This will feature hundreds of pictures and profiles of Tri-Ess sisters. The project is going to cost Tri-Ess a bundle of money. We expect to put the whole issue out for bids as soon as possible.

However, we need your help. We have some of the more recent pictures and profiles, but all sisters with membership numbers LOWER than 2800 need to send us up-to-date pictures and profiles. If you wish to be included in the new Directory, that is. So please check your membership number. If your number is lower than 2800, it is essential for you to send us a new picture and an updated profile within the next sixty (60) days. PLEASE!

The new Directory is a HUGE project. The gals who work at the Tri-Ess office will be putting in hundreds of hours of donated work to complete the job. If you delay or don't send us a picture and profile in time, you will make it a lot harder for us to complete the task. We will have to write to you and request the materials we need. We do try to be complete! You have sixty (60) days to do your part, which probably includes getting a new picture done... a quality one, we hope, and get it to us along with an updated profile.

A word about pictures! Many times pictures are sent to us which are hardly usable. They are often far-underdeveloped, being quite dark. The printer simply cannot do a very good job with such poor pictures. We PREFER close ups, that is, pictures showing you from the waist up. Many times pictures are sent, showing the full length figure standing too far away from the camera and underdeveloped. The resulting print really doesn't do much for you. If you REALLY want to have a nice picture, then PLAN to get one. Have adequate lighting (!) and as indicated, send a photo of yourself from the waist up. You CAN do it if you start planning now. Also, please eliminate from the picture such things such as lamps, furniture, pictures and so forth. Such things detract from the picture a lot. It is better for you if you hang a sheet up against the wall and pose in front of it. Please try this. We'd appreciate it. After all, this edition of the Directory is going to cost us many thousands of dollars, so let's get our best pictures and profiles in it.

Black and white pictures are still the very best. Black and White film doesn't cost much and for publication, they are much much better. Color pictures



often end up a disappointment. They usually make that nice red dress end up showing as black. In addition, if your color photo shows you standing near something of a dark color, your outfit will blend in and make an all-dark picture. That's the problem with color pictures. So please pick up a roll of B&W film and start shooting this week.

In the future, we would like to increase the general quality of the pictures sent to us. You can help, if you will pay attention to what you have just read. Be sure your resulting pictures will be more pleasing to everyone, both you and those who get the Directory.

Are you planning for the next Holiday En Femme? The 1990 event to be held in Houston, in November! It's wonderful to live as a woman for four days. You need to start making plans now. Set aside some money each month so you won't have to scrimp as November approaches.

Last, we have great workers within Tri-Ess. They are people who volunteer their time each month. Most never get their names in print. All these sisters are working for YOU each month. You need to appreciate their activities, for without their work, we wouldn't get much done. That's it this time.... Carol....

MEN IN DRESSES



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WHO'S REALLY IN CHARGE HERE?????

by
DONNA E. MOBLEY

I studied all the smiling faces I saw on the video monitor. They looked like a pretty happy bunch of people, I thought. Dan was grumbling.

"Lookit this mess! There's nothing there, nothing to work with! Sloppiest camera work I ever saw!"

You sure couldn't tell by me. It looked fine as far as I could see, but then, what do I know?

"Lemme explain it to ya," he said patiently. "I promised Diane I'd do a video of the Holiday En Femme. Came up with some nice ideas for a neat little program.... then sent Donna to do the shooting. That was my first mistake! Never send Donna to do Dan's work! Boy, what an airhead!"

Boy, what a sexist pig, I thought.

"So what's the probelm?" I asked. "This all looks fine to me, and the final edit looked really great. Everyone seems to like it."

"Only because I'm an editing genius! I can make a silk purse out of a sow's ear!"

"No thanks, I've got a leather one that does nicely."

"Ok, Ok, so it turned out alright. But this is nothing like what I wanted to put together. Look at it this way: You can't be a participant and an objective observer at the same time."

"Learned that in journalism school, did you?"

He gave me a nasty look. I decided not to push my luck.

"If you get involved, you get too close to what's going on. You can't see the wall for the bricks, can't see the forest for the trees, can't see..."

"Skip the metaphors, babe," I grumbled.

"There's a lot going on here. These folks are all having a good time, sure. But there's some real personal growth and self-exploration going on here. There's business meetings that should have been covered, there's interviews that should have been done... you know, all the real reporter stuff! What I got here is six and half hours of snap shots! Galloping stills!"

"It's really pretty simple, my dear boy. You're

a technician, Donna's an artist. You follow plans, she follows her heart."

"Well, who the heck was she following when she shot off 30 minutes of tape of tourists at Alcatraz?!" he exploded.

"Well, you've got a point there."

"Darned right I do," he growled.

"So you're the detached, impartial observer and reporter of facts and events. Is that what you really wanted here?"

"What I wanted was some interviews! You know, some real insight into what makes these folks tick, what they discovered about themselves, where they're all headed with their lives. What I got was 'How I Spent My Vacation'! I was lucky to get any kind of program out of all that!"

He'd really overlooked the most important part of the whole argument. It seemed pointless to try to explain it to him, but I gave it my best shot anyway.

"You wanted a nice, compact little documentary. Nice, compact, objective and boring as hell." He started to squirm. "So you wrote up all those nifty little 3X5 cards with the shot list and a script outline..."

"And lookit what that dingbat did with them! They're covered with addresses and phone numbers! Found 'em in the bottom of her purse after she got back. I'll bet she never looked at them!"

"Probably didn't, but so what? What you've got here, dear boy, is a personal diary of one girl's exploration of her own self. You can't give her the camera and expect her to see things through your eyes. There are parts of you that aren't interchangeable. She's your creative half, the part that sees a different world. You look and see events.... she looks and sees people. You can't expect her to work with your notes and ideas.... she's got a mind of her own, you know."

"Don't start on me with that! She's got no camera discipline.... look at all this! It's all hand-held stuff! What the heck happened to that big, heavy, expensive tripod I sent out there with her?"

"Ever try to lug something like that around on 3" heels?"

"Well, no, but..."

"Darned right..."

"And I'll bet you brilliantly decided to let her

write the script after all."

"Had to.." he mumbled. "She was the only one who could make any sense out of the stuff she brought back. I mean, if there's any sense of order in all this raw tape, I sure couldn't find it. So I threw away the script and let her write something."

"So forget the interviews she didn't get, and forget the nice little narrative you wrote, which I'm sure was brilliant..."

"Damed right it was..."

"...forget the lighting and the sound and all that technical stuff, and look at all these people having a great time. Isn't that what you wanted to show in the first place?"

"Well, I suppose that's true. But I'll tell you one thing! Ed Murrow sure wouldn't have brought back junk like this!"

"Ed Murrow was a crossdresser?" I asked, incredulously.

"Bite your tongue! You know what I mean....."

The images on the video monitor flickered by in a whirl of dazzling colors. Las Vegas Night.... some kind of awards banquet... girls strolling through Union Square.... cable car rides... and everywhere, there were smiles.

"Isn't this what it's all about?" I asked. "You wanted to record the event. She brought back some of its heart and soul."

He gave me a look of exasperation.

"You're nuts, you know that?"

"Perhaps," I said. "But then, I'm not the one sitting here at the typewriter loseing an argument with myself!"

"T" Party A Texas Size Success Story by Vicki [REDACTED]

Last year an independent group of crossdressers in San Antonio, Texas, proposed sponsoring a modest little gathering of the cross gender community. News of their endeavor spread quickly and many of the celebrities of crossdressing jumped on the bandwagon, causing the planners to expand their expectations and go for a convention on a par with well established weekends like Be All, Fantasia Fair, Holiday EnFemme, and the Provincetown Spring Outing. From all reports the new kid on the block did extremely well. But, that was last year. The question now was would the Boulton and Park Society overcome the sophomore jinx, and would those that praised their efforts last year show the strength of their convictions by attending again.

The answer to both questions is Yes. Arriving on a Thursday as I did the previous year, it was readily apparent that the event was gearing up faster than last year. The very charming and beautiful Paula [REDACTED] already had a harried expression as she registered me and several others that were waiting in line. The volume of early arrivals was even more apparent at the first dinner of the weekend. The previous year the Thursday night meal was held in the hotel diner and was rather unceremonious. This year, not only were we moved to the much larger San Antonio Room in the Seven Oaks Hotel, but entertainment was also provided. Then many retired to the La Vista Room to renew old acquaintances and make new ones, while those that favor a little more action got into their cars and went to any of several clubs which welcome crossdressers.

Friday morning, the La Vista Room buzzed with activity as two separate tours were coordinated from there. The popular City Tour was again available for those wishing to be enriched by the cultural and historical sights of San Antonio. Another tour for those desiring to enrich San Antonio merchants having ladies' ready to wear apparel for sale was also available. Even with two tours in progress the hotel was hardly barren of crossdressers. In the La Vista Room many stayed behind and continued to socialize and watch a series of videotapes on crossdressing. Others relaxed around the pool (the weather really accomodated us this year), had their pictures taken and their hair styled, shopped in the boutique rooms inside the hotel, and attended the Jim Bridges makeup workshops.

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As evening approached, married crossdressers and their spouses were invited to a special Couples Reception. This was a new addition to the program which Tau Chi supports, and plans are being made to expand it to a kind of Marriage Encounter experience preceding the 1991 Texas "T" Party. Following immediately after was a Texas Bar-B-Q buffet, then it was time for Tau Chi's single ladies to shine. Jackie Thorne and Vicki [redacted] were joined by Susan [redacted] (who was attending without her spouse) in the Talent Show. Then those wishing to go on the Bar Tour were directed toward a doubledecker bus, which was affectionately referred to as the Transvestite Assault Vehicle. Another shuttle bus began service to and from a ladies' bar called the Circle Club.

Saturday saw an array of seminars beginning at 9:00 AM and ending at 5:30 PM. Tau Chi's Dr. Peggy Rudd did double duty during the day. She was first joined by Dr. George Brown and Dr. Richard Docter in a workshop for wives, family, and significant others only. Then in the afternoon she was moderator on a panel which concerned itself with the topic of living with a crossdresser. During the noon luncheon she was praised by Dr. Richard Docter and equated with the living legends of crossdressing.

Evening saw our sister chapter in Dallas host a reception in the La Vista Room. Those attending were not only able to chat with the lovely ladies of Delta Omega, but were able to meet the guest speaker for the formal banquet which followed at 7:00 PM. Delta Omega's Betty [redacted] delivered a message that many of us at the crossroads of our desire to dress needed to hear. She asked us to get into an imaginary time machine and travel first twenty years into the past, then twenty years into the future. Through her eyes we were reminded that most of us were still in the closet twenty years ago, and the general public, if they knew anything about us at all, were all too quick to lump us together with sexual perverts. In the twenty years that

followed we have become the darlings of the talk show hosts, and while they have sought to exploit us, we have managed to get our message across nevertheless. Indeed, from my two outings away from the hotel among the general citizenry of San Antonio, I had the feeling that we had risen from the status of pervert to that of a minority group which would have to be dealt with. What then does the future hold for us? Obviously Betty is not a psychic, but she pointed out events occurring now may be pointing us in the direction of full acceptance in the next twenty years. Seems like everyone she talks to has stories about what they have done over the past year to stretch the enjoyment the feminine side of the personality gives them. She also pointed out that the rise of so many crossdressing weekends like the Texas "T" Party is encouraging, as is the fact that Tri-Ess is now forming chapters in the conservative South and in smaller cities which would have been unthinkable a decade ago. With so much knowledge being dispensed and our physical presence being promoted by crossdressing conventions, it is not too much to hope for that in twenty years we will follow the path of other oppressed minorities and be fully assimilated into the general society.

Following Betty's speech the floor was cleared for Fifties Sock Hop. While the floor was not exactly crowded with couples dancing, Baby Boomers like myself found the music of that period a relaxing backdrop for sharing intimate experiences we have had as women. Spouses seemed as anxious to share stories as well and, while it was my intention to retire early so that I could attend church, time got away from me and I again missed the Sunday morning activities which were on the schedule.

Our hats are off to Muffy, Jan, Linda, Jackie, Paula, and all the ladies of the Boulton and Park Society. Having two conventions under their belts and a firm place in the hearts of those attending for the second time, the "T" Party is an unqualified success.

Geech



Gender Conditioning And Crossdressing

by
Judy Adams (NE-2073)

A male in today's society is rigidly cast in a mold which gives him little choice of the role he is allowed to play. He is taught from a very early age the behavior society expects of him. From childhood he is conditioned not to show feelings or awareness of himself as an individual. He is taught it is not what he is that is important, but what he appears to be. In general, males have lost their personal identity and confused their social masks for who they are.

In the process, males are destroying themselves while trying to fill some traditional definition of masculine appropriate behavior. They have set their life goals by those role definitions. They are the warriors, the heroes, the studs, the empire builders, the fearless ones. When something goes wrong or they reach a certain point in their lives, they often discover they are phony to themselves and to others.

Many males evaluate each other and are evaluated by females largely by the degree to which they approximate some ideal masculine model.

They are unknown to themselves. They have been too busy manipulating others and masking themselves. This is done in order to garner and to maintain status, rather than risk genuine encounters with other people which might be threatening to them.

Many males evaluate each other and are evaluated by females largely by the degree to which they approximate some ideal masculine model. Compared to females, males lack the fluidity of the female who can readily move between traditional definitions of masculine and feminine role behavior. A female can be wife and mother or business executive. She can dress in typically feminine fashion or adopt the male styles. She will be loved and admired for having "feminine" interests. She can be sexually assertive or she can be passive. The difference between males and females in these areas, between rigidity and fluidity, between compulsive defensiveness and a more reality-oriented response, rests in the female's greater ability to express strength or weakness, independence or dependence, activity or passivity, rationality or emotionality, courage or fear, and

hetero-sensual or homo-sensual feelings without threat to their ego or self-image.

The male, however, is hooked into a one-track, all-or-nothing masculine response pattern. This pattern often appears regardless of the dictates of external reality. The male is rigidly caught in his masculine pose, and in many subtle and direct ways, he is severely punished if he steps out of it. He knows of this punishment waiting, so he is kept in line by fear.

By the time he has grown, he has become anaesthetized and robotized. He has been heavily socialized to repress and deny almost the total range of his emotions and human needs. In this way he can perform in the acceptable "masculine" way. Feelings become vague unpredictable quantities, expression of which threaten him and make him feel vulnerable. He has blocked out most, if not all, of his feelings. He would sooner die than acknowledge feminine feelings or things. These threaten him most.

This is ironic. The deepest imprint on humans is feminine. It was a female, not a male, who was his lifeline and his deepest source of identification when he was a baby and a young lad. The femininity which helped nurture him is therefore a natural part of his core. It seems the stronger a feminine identification is, and the more it threatens to come to light, the more powerful he feels the need to deny it. Prisons, as well as violent street gangs, are filled with males who have "Mother" tattooed on their arms.

The femininity which helped nurture him is therefore a natural part of his core.

A male's masculine conditioning controls his actions and life in varying degrees. A male's degree of masculine conditioning appears to be weighted as follows:

- Strongly rational or problem-solving orientation;
- Threatened by the acknowledgment of weakness, fear, vulnerability, the exposure of his inner life;
- Competitiveness towards other males with strong compulsive needs to prove himself superior

and able to control or dominate situations;

- Needing to project a totally masculine image while defensively denying anything in him which might be construed as "feminine" or "homosexual"; and

- Fearful of depending on and trusting somebody else.

Unlike the equal rights problems of women, the problems of men are not readily changed through legislation. The male has no apparent and clearly defined targets against which he can vent his rage. It is caused by the forced inhibition of his inner self. Yet he is oppressed by the cultural pressures that have denied him his feelings. He is made slave by the mythology of the woman and the distorted and self-destructive way he sees and relates to her. He is victimized by the urgency for him to "act like a man", which blocks his ability to respond to his inner prompting both emotionally and physiologically. He is bound by a generalized self-denial that causes him to feel comfortable only when he is functioning well in his masculine role. He cannot be comfortable when he lives for joy and personal growth.

By the time he has grown, he has become anaesthetized and robotized. He has been heavily socialized to repress and deny almost the total range of his emotions and human needs.

In countless ways he is constantly being conditioned not to express his feelings and needs openly. Though he has needs for dependency, he learns it is unmasculine to act in a dependent way. It is also unmasculine to be frightened, to want to be held, stroked, and kissed, to cry, etc. While all of these expressions of self are acceptable in a woman, they are incompatible with the man's sought after image of being tough and in control.

While it is perfectly acceptable for a woman, in our culture, to preen and admire herself in front of a mirror. It is perfectly proper for her to spend considerable time caring for her body with long baths, stretching exercises, the use of body creams, etc. Meanwhile the male generally feels uncomfortable and embarrassed about giving his body extensive loving care. To do so is not in line with society's masculine image of him. A female who indulged herself would be considered to be behaving in an appropriate manner. The male, however, would be suspect, accused of being

narcissistic or a latent homosexual.

It is a subtle distinction to recognize how the basic processes, attitudes and behavior patterns which are life sustaining and health nurturing are commonly recognized as feminine. On a physical care level, traditional masculine values and attitudes can be seen as physically self-destructive. For example, it is masculine to be able to take as much pain as possible without giving in to it. To ignore physical problems, to hold alcohol, to recuperate from serious illness quickly, etc. are considered to be very masculine. In fact, there is even something feminine about being sick. Being sick acknowledges vulnerability and helplessness. Many men who are ill are embarrassed to acknowledge it. They will deny it as long as possible. That's masculine!

On a physical care level, traditional masculine values and attitudes can be seen as physically self-destructive.....

The whole masculine mechanism is generally defensive in nature. It includes a defensive reaction against doing anything feminine. Even the slightest hint of femininity is abhorred. This attitude controls his life. It is slowly killing him. Consider the following masculine attitudes

- Emotional expression is feminine.* Women are emotional; men are supposed to control themselves. So men's emotions undergo repression.

- Giving in to pain is feminine.* The man learns to equate his masculinity with his ability to take pain. He won't admit when he's hurting. If he isn't taking part in a sport to prove himself, he may well be watching it on television and taking an active part in the action vicariously.

- Asking for help is feminine.* He drives around the neighborhood for half an hour rather than pulling over to ask for help with directions. When he's hurting, often nobody knows because he won't ask for help.

- Self-care is feminine.* Pampering oneself, taking long, leisurely baths, exploring oneself in front of the mirror, taking beauty rests, etc. are all "feminine" activities. Men have more important things to do, namely, working and being productive. A man who is unduly involved with his physical well-being is suspect. The male feels uncomfortable and embarrassed about giving his body tender

loving care. Many men do not like their bodies and will not take care of them. Is it any wonder men die at a younger age than women?

•*Dependency is feminine.* Letting other people do things for you or take care of you when you are sick, is feminine. The man who can stand alone, does not rely on others, expresses no dependency and is least needful, HE the most manly.

•*Touching is feminine.* Touching, especially when it is purposeless, arouses most men's anxiety and makes them uncomfortable. Males learn this lesson early. Wanting or asking to be cuddled, held, kissed, stroked, or rocked, is for girls. Boys shake hands and that's about all the physical contact they share. Men are extremely careful not to show sensuality or warmth for fear it may be equated with homosexuality.

Many crossdressers have recognized the need for expression of all their feelings and emotions.

Males must recognize this destructive conditioning and refuse to self-destruct just to prove themselves. Males have paid the price of masculinity by losing their emotions, passivity, dependency, vulnerability and so on.

Involved in the conditioning process of becoming a "man" and behaving in an acceptable masculine way requires repression of important core emotions and feelings of the male, which are not experienced consciously. These feelings are encapsulated and denied, yet they continue to operate in indirect, sublimated, or covert ways (such as crossdressing). They search for safe, expressive, and satisfying outlets.

He feels good because he is being true to himself and is not hiding behind the false mask of masculinity.

This repressed core is composed of the male's "forbidden" parts. These are his dependency craving, his vulnerability, his fear, and his other emotions along with his desire to let go, his desire be taken care of and his longing for anything else inside him which might be equated with femininity or unmasculine behavior. The more powerful and threatening this core is, the more rigid his defenses against it will be. The more he feels threatened by this core of his being, the more he will need constantly to prove his autonomy, his ability to

perform, his rationality, his unemotionality, his lack of dependency, and all his other traits which are considered to be masculine. The struggle is between the underlying feelings hungering for expression in the face of a defensive masculine system which works constantly to deny expression of his core; all for the sake of his masculine image he strives endlessly to prove the core doesn't exist. Many crossdressers have recognized the need for expression of all their feelings and emotions. Crossdressing is a mechanism which allows these feelings and emotions to be expressed.

To express feelings, needs, and emotions; to know oneself, and to be known to others, are basic human needs. They show we are individually unique and different from others. We each have needs of our own. For some crossdressers, the need to express and show inner feelings (which society considers to be feminine) was ignited (triggered) into consciousness by some event or experience with feminine clothing. Such clothing is aesthetically and sensually attractive, especially to a youngster not yet fully conditioned to avoid women's clothes. He finds, also provided, an escape mechanism for his feelings and from overly restrictive masculine conditioning restraints.

We each have needs of our own.

Those first encounters with women's clothing probably provided a powerful release of emotions and feelings which males are not supposed to feel or experience. This expression of feeling along with the sexual connotations felt, had to be hidden from others. This was because males are not supposed to acknowledge/display feminine feelings or allow any perceptions of female sexuality (which the use of women's clothes implies). Because of society's taboos and conditioning imposed on males, any release of these feelings along with the apparently female behavior (wearing women's clothes) was probably accompanied by much guilt. Many of us still carry this sort of illogical and irrational guilt.

For the crossdresser, there is often a tremendous sense of relaxation and "rightness" felt when he is crossdressed. The "rightness" is not so much because he is crossdressed or because he pretends he really is a female, but because he is being true to his inner promptings, feelings, and urges to express himself. This provides a deep

sense of satisfaction. He feels good because he is being true to self and is not hiding behind the false mask of masculinity.

There are varying degrees of satisfaction in crossdressing. Pleasure and the feelings experienced when crossdressed may be limited by the degree of masculine conditioning. Learning how to express feelings fully takes much time, effort, and personal growth. Unfortunately for many of us, we may never be able to unmask all our feelings or develop the degree of femininity we have buried within us. We have spent a lifetime hiding our feelings, manipulating others, and living the masculine stereotype. Some of us have our femininity buried too deeply for us ever to dig ourselves out of the prisons we have built for our feminine feelings. Others are more fortunate.

Crossdressing provides us a vehicle for expressing our human (feminine) feelings. We need to express these, but are supposed to suppress them

If getting well in releasing feelings is feminine, then crossdressers are definitely on the right track.

. It is wrong to view crossdressing as primarily a sexual thing. It is really a gender orientation which allows a male to express feelings he has not been allowed to express. The sexually oriented view of crossdressing must be changed. This can only be done through education and changes in societies' views of masculinity and femininity.

There is a trend towards fewer gender restrictions, however, society has a long way to go before recognizing and acknowledging males have a right to their feelings too. Only then, can the male be emotionally released and allowed to grow into a fully functioning human being.

For Males to get well (in general), they must discard their masculine defensive gender roles and develop more characteristics generally associated with femininity.

If getting well in releasing feelings is feminine, then crossdressers are definitely on the right track. Men's liberation may someday free men from the emotional binds of masculinity which some of us have already partially broken through via crossdressing.

Late News Flash Tri-Ess Board of Directors Meets at IFGE Convention in Boston

The Tri-Ess Board of Directors met at the 1990 IFGE "Coming Together-Working Together" Convention just concluded in Boston. Present were Virginia Prince, Diane [REDACTED], Jane Ellen Fairfax, Shirley Kay, Lynda Frank, Naomi Owen, Donna Mobley, Frances Fairfax and Glenda Jones. With Virginia Prince presiding, the Board discussed a number of issues left unresolved at the previous Board Meeting in San Francisco. These included the quality and timeliness of Tri-Ess' publications (Femme Mirror and Membership Directory), communications between members and the national organization, concerns of wives and partners, clarification of new membership categories created at the previous Board Meeting, and funding of publications and the Holiday EnFemme.

After some initial discussion, the Board created the post of Chairman of the Board of Directors, whose duties will include presiding at Board Meetings and serving as a clearing house for concerns brought to her attention by other Board Members and the membership at large. The Chairman will appoint Regional Representatives for different areas of the country. They will assist members in their regions with chapter formation and other matters, and convey their members' concerns to the Board. Jane Ellen Fairfax was elected Interim Chairman and conducted the balance of the meeting.

Shirley Kay was appointed Director for Wives and Partners Concerns. She will work with Membership Director Donna Martin to produce a Directory, Mail Forwarding Service and newsletter for Wives and Partners.

Comptroller Virginia Prince informed the Board that a new Membership Directory is being compiled. Some alternative plans for producing the Directory were discussed, and detailed written proposals will be considered by the Executive Committee before a final decision is reached.

Donna Mobley was appointed Communications Director for Tri-Ess, to be responsible for issuing press releases to chapter newsletters and for producing Tri-Ess' audiovisual materials.

The new membership category for Associate Members was renamed "Friends of Tri-Ess". This will include vendors and others who support the goals and philosophy of Tri-Ess but are not eligible for regular membership. Further discussion of this issue was deferred to the next meeting of the full Board, and the meeting was then adjourned.

BOOK REVIEW....

by Jeanette [REDACTED]

TRANSFORMATIONS

Crossdressers and Those Who Love Them



Dee: "I played baseball as a kid, but if a girl walked by who was really dressed up nice, my mind would wander off and I'd run home to dress up."

"One picture is worth a thousand words." Old Chinese Proverb.....

"One touch is worth a thousand pictures." Ronnie Milsap from *Stranger Things Have Happened*.

Transformations-- Crossdressers and Those Who Love Them touched me deeply.

Mariette Pathy Allen is well known within the cross dressing community. Her photographs have been seen on television, in art museums in the United States and abroad, and also on the covers of *Tapestry* magazine. Transformations is the culmination of twelve years of her interaction with crossdressers, their families and friends.

The book is 160 pages of color and black and white photographs with accompanying stories of individual crossdressers. Mariette's formal training in art shows throughout the book. Beyond the technical abilities of a photographer, she shows an artist's eye for composition and the use of shadows. An empathy is evident in the photographs and writing and shows Mariette not only loves her work but also her subjects.

Retail price of Transformations is \$24.95. Most major book chains are carrying the book in their gift book section. If it can not be found at your local book shop, you can order it from IFGE, Box 367, Wayland, MA 01778. Be sure to add: \$2.50 for postage and handling..... It's worth every cent of it!!!!



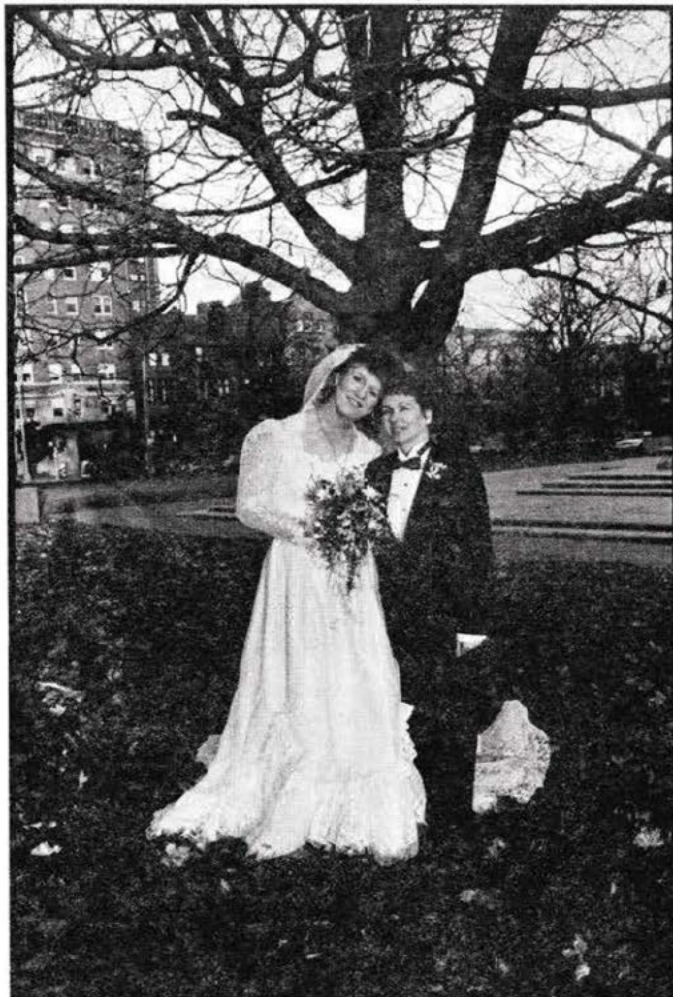
Felicity: This is one of the more touching photographs. It shows Felicity at age 79 and in the background at age 5 1/2. As was customary in the early 1900's young boys wore their hair in a short bob. Before cutting his hair in June 1911, his mother dressed him in the clothes of a neighbor girl and had his father take a picture. Seven years later, Felicity came across the picture which revived his memory of the event and kindled an irresistible desire to cross dress.



Davida: Davida and mate, Corrine.



Allison: This photograph shows beautiful composition with a touch of humor.



Renee and Kevin: Renee: "We were in love with each other, and it didn't matter what clothes I wore."

To a friend in Japan.....

Donna (CA-2320-F)

This letter comes from Cloud 9, just across the bay from San Francisco. The Holiday En Femme ended on Sunday. It was an event I will never forget.

Last Wednesday, I spent most of the morning getting myself ready and packing. Try as I might to limit what I was taking, it still took two 30" suitcases to contain it all. I don't know what I'll do if I decide to go to Boston next March or Houston in November.

Vicki, a sister from Mexico City, whom I planned to meet at the airport, decided not to come after the earthquake so I drove to the City alone. Because the Bay Bridge was still out, it took almost two hours for a trip which normally takes 30 minutes.

I arrived at the hotel Californian about 2:00 PM, checked in, and found my roommate was Janette, an ETVC member I had met in July. (ETVC is a local Bay Area support group for transvestites, transsexuals, wives, significant others, etc.)

After dressing in my favorite sweater and skirt, there was only time for the clear base coat and one color coat of nail polish. The second color coat and clear top coat would have to wait until later. At 3:30, I went downstairs and registered for the Holiday events. At four o'clock, we had our first get-acquainted tea.

There were about 38 sisters from across the country and Canada. One even came from Hamburg, West Germany. Seven wives also made the trip. Dinner that night was on our own. Beverly, from Canada, whom I'd not seen in two years; Joyce, who lives only five miles away, but I'd never met; Janette and I went up the street to one of my favorite restaurants.

On the way, we had to pass by two of SF's best live theaters where a group of teenagers were waiting for an early performance of *Les Miserables*. We got a few looks and a comment of "Look at that!", but nothing else. We had a great dinner, after which we went back to the hotel for the welcome party.

Introductions were made and the logistics of the different events were covered. About a dozen of the girls were repeats from two years ago. The evening was spent in renewing old friendships and getting to know new girls.

Thursday morning was the wine tour. I didn't go since I made the trip the last time, and wanted to let someone else get a chance this year. I did, however, want to see the girls off and say hello to Lyle, the

"Superior" guide who gave us such an enjoyable tour two years ago. Janette and I had a leisurely breakfast and wandered about the hotel.

In the afternoon, Janette had a make up session with Jim Bridges, a make up artist from Hollywood, and I took a nap. I did manage to get to Hanson Fontana, about two blocks away, to pick up a new wig. I got a new wig comb too so I could start learning to style for myself. Later, Diane Ingram hosted a very interesting tea on the subject of public speaking.

Dinner was at an elegant French restaurant about a block from the hotel. Later we cabbied to North Beach for an evening at La Cage. There were about 40 of us and no more than a dozen or so of other customers. When the mistress of ceremonies found out who we were, we became the show. It was a very interesting evening.

Friday morning was the Alcatraz tour. We did this two years ago. They had planned a bay cruise this time. However, all those ferry boats were tied up carrying commuters because the bridge was out. Since there were so many new girls along, it didn't seem like we had done it before. Lunch was at No. 9, Fisherman's Wharf.

Friday afternoon was my make up time with Jim Bridges. It is hard for me to enjoy being pampered, but I'm learning to like it. His assistant, Michelle, did most of the work on me. I learned a lot and looked great. Dinner that night was in the hotel.

After dinner, eight of us took two cars over to a party one of the ETVC's therapists was hosting to celebrate her first year in practice. Her small offices were very crowded, but I managed to say hello to many old friends. Then we drove over to the Chez Mollet, ETVC's regular meeting place, for a welcome party for the Tri-Ess convention. As always, we had a great time.

Saturday morning was spent in a workshop on chapter development. Someday, I would like to see a Tri-Ess chapter in the Bay Area. I learned a lot and made contact with the forming group in Sacramento.

Janette and I had lunch with Marlene, who is in charge of chapter development for Tri-Ess national. My wife, Julie, came over on BART after lunch and we drove over to the Chez for our mid-month educational social on "passing Plain and Fancy" given by an ETVC member who runs a charm school. These are usually held in the afternoon so I don't often get the chance to attend.

Back to the hotel to view the raw video of the first three days, I went. The dinner Saturday evening

was the annual awards banquet where I accepted one of the awards for ETVC. Tri-Ess presented us with a 'Solidarity Award' in recognition of our work together on several events during the convention.

Julie left for home after dinner and we cabbled over to the big event. The two groups had rented a large hall and staged a Las Vegas Casino Night, complete with entertainment and gambling for charity.

The only negative incident of the entire Holiday occurred on the way back from Vegas Night. Cabs were hard to come by. Two of the sisters walked half a block up to Van Ness to flag a cab. They told him others were to be picked up, but when he saw us, we were read. He made them get out of the cab. I wish they had gotten the number of the cab. They reported he had an open bottle with him. Maybe it's just as well we didn't ride with him. You need all your faculties to drive the hills of San Francisco.

Sunday brunch is traditionally a non-dressed event. It is always fun to watch the wives, especially, try to figure out who everyone is. I have learned to frame faces mentally and do a better job than most at matching people. Afterwards, Janette and I drove over to the Chez for one last drink and then headed home. It was a little strange because the Bay Bridge was open again. I was able to spot the new peice of it.

The end of the Holiday is always a big let down. Julie absorbed my tears of joy. This year was a little better. Last time I had not found a group and didn't have any idea when I would see anyone again. Now it's only a little over a week until my next outing...

The next **HOLIDAY EN FEMME** will be in Houston. Dates are: November 1990.

Make your plans now. Be there.



Needed: All types of artwork....

While we strive to make the Mirror as informative as we can, we also want it to be as eye appealing as we can make it. Therefore we need all types of

Transvestias Needed

The Special Collections Department of the California State University, Northridge library currently has 96 of the 100 issues of Transvestia edited by Virginia Prince. Most of these have been supplied by Dr. Vern Bullough, a member of the Tri-Ess Advisory Committee, Virginia Prince, and Sandy Thomas. We want to find the following issues to make the collection complete: issues #66,85,86, and 94.

This is believed to be the only library in the world holding these Transvestia materials, together with extensive related books, magazines, and other documents of historical interest. They are all part of the Vern and Bonnie Bullough Collection which is second in size only to the sexology materials assembled by Dr. Alfred Kinsey. Virginia Prince has recently added to the collection through donation of original working files, correspondence, and type-scripts used in the production of Transvestia between about 1960 and 1980. These 100 issues, together with other publications, offer a unique historical insight into the early days of the cross dressing club movement throughout the world. We are much indebted to Dr. Bullough and to Virginia for making these materials available.

Anyone can visit the Special Collections Department at Cal State Northridge and use the materials without charge. The Bullough Collection is used extensively by university students and by researchers working on television and motion picture projects.

If you are able to assist in finding these four missing issues of Transvestia, or if you are interested in discussing other possible additions to the collection please write:

Richard F. Docter, PhD
Department of Psychology
CSUN
Northridge, CA 91330



photos, cartoons, and artwork (all in good taste, of course) to liven up our pages. So, Gals, get busy and make the postman work over time bringing it to us.....

Chrissie's Story

Dear sisters in Chi Chapter,

My name is Chrissie. I am writing this letter to you because I feel like I owe you a debt.

I had never told anyone in my family about my feminine self. Because of staying in the closet for thirty-six years (I'm forty now) stress and guilt had reached an almost unbearable level. It got to the point that the pain of embarrassment of telling my secret was not as bad as the pain of keeping it inside me. I had to let it out or I felt that I would explode. It's a very tough position to be in and I wouldn't wish it on anybody.

My father, who was also a transvestite, passed away on November 10, 1974. I have always felt very close to him, and perhaps he is partly responsible for my being this way. My mother, I felt, rejected him because he liked to dress. I was not about to run the same risk and suffer a similar fate.

Times change, people change, guilt accumulates, and it eventually it all becomes too much. That is where I was at last week. I just couldn't take it any more. I was willing to risk rejection by my mother if it came to that, but I had to tell her the truth and admit who and what I was. Telling the truth and being honest with others and myself has never been easy as I was always hiding something.

We compare each other with ourselves, such as, "Where did Chris get his height?" or, "He has his father's ears," etc. Physically, I look like my dad, I'm just about nine inches taller and thirty pounds lighter. The way I broke it to my mother was that I was more like my dad in feelings and emotions than she might know. I told her that I knew that my dad liked to dress in ladies' clothes, and that I do, too. I said that all I needed from her was for her to tell me if she could accept me as I am or if she would reject me. I was willing to risk it all, but I was tired of twisting in the wind. I felt like Chrissie was a bastard child who needed to become legitimate. Her answer was so cool, calm, and matter-of-fact that I almost fell off my chair. She said that crossdressing wasn't what it used to be, and that the world has changed. She said that crossdressing had gained a lot of respect and that "Nowadays, you even see it on the Donahue Show." And that's a quote! Can you believe it? Do you understand how much you have done for me and my sisters, and why I feel that I owe this debt to you? You couldn't have done better if you had paved the road

between my house and my mom's with gold! That's how much I think of you. You knocked down my "Berlin Wall" so all I had to do was walk to the other side. I'll never be able to thank you girls enough.

Now, I think that my mother and I may be able to get very close together and be good friends. I always felt that I had to keep her at arms' length. If she got too close, she might see me for the terrible person I thought I was. But now all that insecurity and guilt have disappeared.

I asked my mom if she would like to see me dressed and her answer amazed me. She didn't say anything negative at all. All she said was, "Give me time." I guess you know that now, even I believe in miracles! I don't need anything for Christmas this year, because I got what I always wanted and needed.

She asked if I just dressed around the house of if I went out. I told her that I go out, and that I have two Tri-Ess chapters that I belong to.

I had one of your brochures and so I took it with me when I went to see her. I can't believe that I actually did it. I can't believe that I mustered the strength, as my mother (I thought) had been difficult to talk to. Because my nephew lives at my mom's, I doubt if I'll ever go out there dressed, but I might. You never know. Times change. I do believe there is a possibility that my mom may come down here to visit me. Who knows, we might even go shopping or to a Tri-Ess meeting together! Amazing!

Write back if you like, although it's surely not necessary. Thanks for listening.

Sincerely,

Chrissie
CA 2331 W

An Ad this size costs
Tri Ess members only
\$20

Could 1100+ potential
new customers help
your business?

The Battle of the Loo

by
Mikki [REDACTED]

The recent run of articles in Rosebuds regarding use of ladies' rooms while dressed en femme brought back laughing memories of my first encounter with --- you guessed it--- THE LOO while dressed en femme.

As a fanatic student of Military History, my thoughts have always turned to the famous one-liners of military lore as I battled my way out of the closet with my crossdressing adventures. This particular firefight proved no exception.

General MacArthur once uttered those famous words, "I shall return," in the early days of "The Big War". Like him, my femme-self, whose first appearance in any form came at the ripe old age of 42, was beaten back into the jungle by age 43. By age 44, like MacArthur, she returned--- ready to do battle with anything that got in the way of her free feminine expression. Following the advice of Admiral Farragut, who told his men: "Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!" (US Civil War), Mikki just burst down the closet doors in an effort to learn all about herself, have herself accepted as part of 'him', and begin responsibly integrating herself into 'his' life.

Talk of BLITZKRIEG (German: Lightning War): in two years I went from the stage of never having touched a piece of women's clothing and believing crossdressers were those guys who appeared on Donahue (of whom I thought they must be real crazy, because I asked, "Who in their right mind would want to emulate something which in real life was nothing but a pain in the ass?") to a fullfledged card carrying member of Tri-Ess. If you want some excitement, try that rollercoaster ride as you're barreling through mid-life crisis.

By November, 1989, I was making my first real public appearance dressed en femme. It occurred at Tiffany Club's Thanksgiving Dinner. Now I had been to BE ALL '89, so this was not exactly my first time out. But being shut up in a hotel lobby with 250+ other crossdressers was not exactly my idea of "going public". With this dinner, I was driving up to Boston from Connecticut dressed en femme, participating in a dinner at a public restaurant (where the "straight" clientele outnumbered the dressed), and driving home dressed en femme. Naturally, being an engineer by profession, and a military strategist at heart, I had this whole outing planned to a "T".

Reviewing my battle plan, I realized my weakest defense point would be handling "nature calls" while dressed en femme. Neither option for attacking this point of resistance looked promising. A flanking movement using the men's room while dressed en femme was just plain out of the question. Likewise, a frontal assault by using the ladies' room did not appear much better. Somehow, it looked like this dinner would become a fierce firefight, with the "Battle of the Loo" determining who won the war. In the end, I settled for what can basically be called a siege. I would severely limit my intake of fluid and food that day, maximize the bodily function of waste disposal prior to getting dressed, and hang on for dear life. The fact I was taking diuretic pills for high blood pressure control was not a strong point of the plan, but it was the best I could manage.

Talk of BLITZKRIEG! (German: Lightning War); in two years I went from a stage of never touching a piece of women's clothing to.....

By 21:30 hours (9:30PM for you 'civilians'), I was in a victorious mood. No battle had been so brilliantly executed as the one I waged that night. I had had an excellent dinner with good friends, and never once had I needed to go near the dreaded Loo. The Battle of the Loo had been easily won by superior planning. Within half an hour, I would begin the 2-hour drive home; victory was within my grasp. The battle quote of "I have met the enemy and he is mine" kept running through my mind. Alas, like all good plans--- this victory celebration was short lived. By 22:00 hours, the rumblings of a fierce firefight could be heard in the stomach area. The battle spread. Soon the pains of war had me thinking of "retreating" since they had moved low in the abdomen. In vain I looked for help. The reinforcements I received from those sitting at the table were less than encouraging. Statements like: "You have no choice" and "Better here than McDonald's on the way home" were not exactly the morale boosters I was hoping to hear.

Within a short time, the need to act became so great a head on frontal attack didn't even become a choice, but a matter of necessity. I felt like the "Charge of the Light Brigade" as I assembled what remained of my courage and headed for the ladies' room.

I tried to plan my entrance into that foreboding place of iniquity so there would be no one there when I entered. In this I succeeded. Quickly, I beelined for

a stall, shut the door, pulled up the skirt and --- uh, uh, oh--- realized I had violated rule #1--- don't put your panties on under your garters.... Of course, nature was not slacking off the attack just because I had made the stall. It was a real quick and dirty undressing job; eight garters became quickly unsnapped (four from the waist cincher and four from the girdle to hold in the waist cincher--- when you are 5'10", weigh 250# and are snug in a size 24.... these are the things you have to endure). The skirt came up, the panties down, and with nylons sagging, I somehow managed to get arranged on the convenience with the barest of moments to spare.... Skirmish 1: Mother Nature!

***Eventually, the challenge was met.
The exit was made....***

Sitting here alone in that stall gave me plenty of time to ponder the situation. For the moment, I felt secure. The closed stall was like a deep foxhole. I just cuddled up in its smallness to think. First to come to mind was a realization of fear. What if I had worn that 'all in one' I had laid out instead of this panty girdle? The visions of trying to satisfy Mother Nature through that little opening in the 'all in one' sent cold chills through my body. Trying to put a piece of thread through the eye of a needle seemed easy in comparison. Next was the realization of how much cleaner and nicer ladies' rooms are than men's. No phone numbers on the stall walls listing blind dates, no poetry, no artistic graffiti.... no doubt about it, women know how to go to the Loo with class.

The quietness of the stall was broken by voices of female women.... I was quickly brought back into the real world. This was their natural habitat.... their turf... their room, and I was an intruder. I was behind enemy lines. Somehow, sitting on that toilet seat, the walls didn't seem thick enough to protect me from the X-Ray vision I knew they all possessed. There were a few bright spots of fun as I overheard them talking when they didn't think anyone was around to hear their conversations about what was out in the adjoining room. I also realized I couldn't stay in the potty forever and had better make some plans to get out.

Naturally, the exit would be made when no one (or at least no female woman) was in the room. That would be just a simple matter of timing. The retreat plan was then all set: get dressed, sit on the throne until the room was empty, and leave. This was easier said than done. It might not be a problem for those of you who take a size 12 dress, but those stalls leave a lot of room to be desired for someone of my bulk. **HAVE YOU EVER** tried to hold up your skirt with

one hand; bend over, raise your panties, pull up your nylons, cinch them up tight, reattach 8 garters (the front ones are easy, but the rear ones.... a challenge even with two hands and in plenty of room), with one hand and do this in a space about the same width as your body? This is a worthy challenge indeed, especially when you are trying to do this inconspicuously, keeping your feet pointed in the right direction, and in general trying to give the impression to the outside world you are just sitting there.... all without the tension reliever of verbalizing loudly a whole series of four letter words so common for the male persona....

Eventually the challenge was met. The exit was made. A simple little task of going to the Loo had turned into a 35 minute ordeal. As I made my way back to the table, a round of applause from my "buddies" greeted my return, to add further insult to my bruised ego, and with good humor they noted their concern at how long I had been in the Loo, and how they were getting set to send in the troops to rescue me!!!

A better battle plan than the "holding siege" I had tried, is required when going out dressed en femme."

As with everything in life, there was something to learn from this adventure. A better battle plan than the "holding siege" I had tried, is required when going out dressed en femme. I haven't heard of too many successful ones, but one worth trying may be to just carry an extra \$5.00 bill, and when the roar of battle becomes deafening and you have to act, swallow your pride, march up to a store clerk or whatever with the deal that the fiver is his if you can use the store's private stall without questions!



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Rehab Center
by
Nancy [REDACTED]

*The combination of enlightened jurisprudence
and technology can have surprisingly effective
(and pleasant) results...*

"I'm out!" Tom thought. He turned for a moment to look at the gate - ugly grey steel criss-crossed by the laser guard. Already it was sliding closed, smoothly driven by hidden motors, shutting away the friends he had made inside. He turned and walked away, his skirts swishing and swirling, his heels clicking brightly on the dirty grey sidewalk.

They charged that he had threatened a violent act against womenkind. That wasn't really true, but the law fails to distinguish subtle variations on a theme. He was new to the city, lonely, new in his apartment complex, no money to keep a car charged, his job dull with routine keyboarding. He had too much time on his hands. Restless from college in a small town he thought the city would be full of interesting things to do. He hadn't realized how much he needed somebody. He had tried the companionship bulletin boards, the local friendclubs, even the old standbys - museums, concerts, walking in the park. Nobody clicked.

When he rode up in the elevator with that neat shy girl in the apartment two floors down she seemed to be just what he needed. It wasn't hard to talk to her at all - she seemed to be lonely too. But his assumptions about what she wanted when she invited him in after their first date were considerably in error. He never touched her, but maybe he was a little forceful in trying to persuade her. All of a sudden there was a stunner in her hand and she didn't seem shy about using it.

Things moved fast after that. The patrol took a psychodump on both of them and the replay was convincing enough to charge him. In hours his public defender had worked out a plea to "psychological violence" carrying two-to-five with a chance at parole in eighteen months, and he was off to the big house. But there was an important stop first - the Psychological Assessment Bureau.

"There's this new program," said his counselor, an indistinct, colorless little man. "I've reviewed your tapes, and basically, most of the kind of behavior that got you into trouble is a consequence of inadequate extra-psyche sensitivity. You just didn't see her point of view. You're an excellent candidate for our outpatient technology-based attitude-modification program. It's an opportunity for you to see how the other half lives, first-hand, so to speak."

Tom was having some trouble taking this all in. "Could you be a little more specific?" he asked.

"You serve your time on the outside, as a girl," said the little man.

"Say what?" asked Tom.

The counselor was only too glad to elaborate. "There's some deportment and grooming training, some figure modification, and some head work," he said. "It takes about six weeks. Then we let you out. We help with documents, job placement and wardrobe. The rest is up to you. You'll be a fully-functioning girl for the minimum length of your sentence, which is in your case, let me see, twenty-four months, and then you have the option to convert back. That's it."

Tom had to ask. "What do you mean, option?"

"We're running - let me see now - just over 63% of our clients electing to stay as girls," he said. "We oblige. Makes you wonder though, doesn't it? The program is just three years old so we don't have very good statistics, but the recidivism rate is zero so far. It's also a very inexpensive program to administer, what with the very limited time you spend incarcerated, even taking into account our medical and wardrobe expenses. And society gets a productive worker, not a drone in a cell."

This was a really strange situation. Tom had always been pretty well attached to his manhood, but still the issue was eighteen months or six weeks on the inside. That's what it came down to. He thought he could probably live as a man anyway, even after this "program." How complete could it be?

"Would you like to see what our clients look like after the figure program?" the counselor asked. He switched on the wall and popped up a nice big color stereo of one of his "clients."

Forget the idea of living like a man. That woman was gorgeous. Extra-lush in the right places, nice and slim elsewhere. She was every man's fantasy. "Do you teach how to fight off men?" Tom asked weakly. "That's what it's all about, my friend," the counselor said. "If you didn't look this good you wouldn't have the experience."

Six weeks or eighteen months. "I guess I'm in," Tom said. He was at the Center that afternoon.

Imagine a cross between a prison, a girl's school, and a hospital. Add in twenty-three clients in various stages of rehabilitation, a beauty parlor, self-defense classes, and an incredibly compressed series of lessons on how to be a girl. Everybody studied

very hard. Failure meant you dropped out of the program.

The Center supplied all of Tom's clothes right from the first day, and they were of first quality and absolutely current fashion. Clients were expected to take their place in society in good jobs among successful and attractive men and women. And also a good wardrobe (and fine underclothes) would go a long way to bolster their wearers' confidence at a time they would need it most.

On his arrival, Tom had to dress immediately. Since the "return to classic style" movement in fashion a few years ago, women's clothes had become much more complex and beautiful. First the brassiere (of limited usefulness initially), then the demicorset, a compromise between modern comfort and the classic tradition, still laced in the back but made with a new material that stretched in one direction only. Then came the stockings with their maddeningly difficult garters, and finally the elaborate panties, a frothy confection of silk, lace, ribbons, and ruffles. Over this went Tom's chemise with its beautiful satin ribbon bows and its lace at the neckline and hem, and then the bulky petticoat, yards and yards of marvelously light synthetic which rustled at a breath and never needed a minute's care. Oxford shoes were the rage - a dozen eyelets to lace up, with a pointed toe and moderately high heel.

Next came his dress. Tom's daydresses all had very full skirts of floor length, the necklines quite daringly decollete', bodices fitting very closely to the waist. There was one beautiful formal with a layer of white moire silk over pink tulle, trimmed in simulated pearls and caught in scallops with pink satin bows. He had one "intimate" dress too - these were reserved for one-on-one entertaining at home. Tom's was black velvet with puffed sleeves, very long (it even had a short train) but slit nearly to the waist, the neckline cut so low as to require the very best of posture always. And he had two white sportsdresses. These were full-skirted but much shorter (well above the knee) and less constricting. The Center provided a full recreation program offering tennis, handball, basketball, and several active electronic sports, and as in society at large, sportsdresses were required.

Dressing usually took at least half an hour in the morning but after a few days Tom finally became proficient enough to dress himself without assistance. He had always been equivocal about the "return to classic style" movement in women's fashion, but now he could really appreciate what it meant to the wearer. Not only did it take forever to get dressed, but just sitting down in those massive skirts was quite difficult. During the first few weeks his clothes needed some adjustment but after that the figure modification program adjusted Tom to fit them.

By the way, it wasn't just during the day that Tom was so elaborately dressed. The Center provided him several beautiful and frilly nightgowns, each more ornate and fussy than the next. Tom's were layers upon layers of beautiful lace, trimmed with ribbon, and were worn over a simple chemise of white satin.

Of all the Center's activities, figure modification required the least of the client. It took a few hours, twice a week - no discomfort, no cutting. Slowly the new curves grew and the old masculine characteristics faded. It all happened so gradually that Tom was shocked when he realized that his bra was really coming in handy!

The program at the Center was quite complete. Tom learned makeup, hair and skin care, diet and weight management, etiquette, and dance (Tom was quite a good dancer and it was hard for him to learn not to lead). His voice had become a pleasant soprano and he even learned to sing a little. But the most intensive and interesting classes were in social behavior. Tom's favorite (and everybody else's) was about flirting. Tom knew how a girl flirts only from his side of it - the attraction he felt when he was being flirted with. But now he learned how it was done. The shy smile, the batted lash, the quick little laugh were natural mannerisms to most women, but not to the Center's clients. Everybody got a big kick out of the homework!

"Graduation" came almost too soon for Tom. He was caught up in his new life. The old decision between six weeks or eighteen months inside seemed irrelevant now. He was apprehensive about the outside - he felt a little like being thrown to the wolves, and he was! But he also had made several good girlfriends - people he could confide utterly in, and always think of with deep affection and respect.

On his last day Tom chose a green taffeta dress to wear on his first day outside. His new wardrobe was packed and sent to his new apartment. The Center had been kind enough to dispose of his old apartment and handle his things for him. Whatever would not be necessary in his new role was stored and the rest moved to his new place. They even had a decorator in to put some feminine touches on his new place.

A few words of encouragement from the Center's administrator, a peck on the cheek from his friends, and with a rustle of skirts he was out the gate and on his own.

Nancy [REDACTED] (NY-2577-B)

Tri Ess Chapters & Forming Groups

(NOTE: Those chapters with no mailing address may be contacted through the Tri Ess Headquarters at P.O. Box 194, Tulare, CA 93275)

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Alpha Omega
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Elyria, OH 44036

Alpha Rho
Catherline UT 2514 B

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Alpha Provesta
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Alpha Zeta
Diane AZ 1567 B
Terri AZ 1992 F

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Delta Omega
P.O. Box 1021
Arlington, TX 76004-1021

Iota Alpha
Beverly IA 1615 B

Cedar Rapids, IA
Iowa Artistry
PO Box 75
Cedar Rapids, IA 52406

Iota Epsilon
Lynnette CA 2273 P
Kay CA 2145 P

"Inland Empire", CA
Donna Martin
PO Box 245
W. Covina, CA 91793

Lambda Iota
Joann NY 1816 M

NY, NY
Lambda Iota
PO Box 121
Ozone Park, NY 11416

Nu Omicron Phi
Judy
FC CAN 2315 K

Phi
Donna NM 2253 S
Kathy NM 2287 V

Phi Epsilon Mu
Dale FL 2117 L

Phi Sigma
Sarah FC CAN 2465 G

Rho Chi Rho
June NE 2070 H

Sigma Epsilon
Julie NC 2241 A

Sigma Nu Rho
Dorothy NJ 1286 G

Tau Chi
Melanie Thorn

Theta Omega Gamma
Mirranda Sue
MI 1256 B

Tri Delta Chi
Lee LA 2460 D

Kappa Beta
Julie NC 2241 A

The following forming groups may be contacted in care of the leader shown. Send mail care of Tri Ess Headquarters.

Tuscon, AZ

Ottawa, Canada
Nu Omicron Phi
PO Box 7421
Vanier, ON K1K8E4
Canada

New Mexico, etc.
Phi Chapter
PO Box 1842
Farmington, NM 87499

Orlando, FL
Dale Larson
11 Weschester Dr
Kissimmee, FL 34744

Calgary, Canada
Phi Sigma
PO Box 2546
Medicine Hat, AB
T1A8G8 Canada

Omaha, NE
River City Ruffles
PO Box 24060
Omaha, NE 68124

Southeastern States
Sigma Epsilon
PO Box 339
Helena, AL 35080

Trenton, NJ
Sigma Nu Rho
PO Box 9255
Trenton, NJ 08650

Houston, TX
Tau Chi
PO Box 1105
Alief, TX 77411

Detroit, MI
Theta Omega Gamma
C/O Tri Ess Hq

New Orleans, LA
Tri Delta Chi
PO Box 870213
New Orleans, LA 70187

Charlotte, NC
Kappa Beta
PO Box 12101
Charlotte, NC 28220

Brenda AZ 2856 D

Sacramento, CA

Kay CA 1542 M

San Jose, CA

Rose Ann CA 1074 C

(Continued on page 37)

Discovery... My Journey

by

Janette [REDACTED]

As with all stories, there is a beginning and an ending. What makes this story different is, the place to stop (the end) changes every passing day. This is a story of love, fear, guilt, and all the other things a crossdresser endures until realizing the girl within must live and share the same body with which we are born. We must come to the understanding, eventually, the total sum of our personality is both girl and boy at the same time. No matter what we wear, Levis and Tee Shirt or a beautiful evening gown, we are who we are.

Then reality set in. The fear of being caught gripped me. I felt guilty....

For over 40 years, I've crossdressed in some manner. I can remember, when I was very young, wearing a slip put on me by my mother. My hair was not cut until just before starting school. Many times I can remember people telling my mother I was a pretty little girl. I don't recall her ever correcting them. I do believe my mother wished I had been born female. As time went on, I played with girls as much as with boys. I enjoyed both. I played with a girl down the street who was my age... about 6. She had an older sister, maybe 12 or 13. She was about my best friend. One day a box of old clothes came to our attention. They were girls' clothes. I was excited.... tried on a dress. From this time on when my friends' mother was away, she and her sister would help me dress in girls' clothes, panties, slip, and dress with shoes to match. We played like three girls. I loved every minute of it.

Time went on. I must have lost the urge to dress. A few years later, I was a den chief, a boy scout helping cub scouts. The den mother was the mother of a friend (male). The den was going to put on a skit at the next meeting. A girl was needed to play a small part. Somehow I got volunteered to do it. When they slipped that dress over my head, I was hooked again. I complained loudly because I did not want anyone to know how much I enjoyed wearing the dress and feeling like a girl.

After the skit, I dressed in my mother's clothes as often as I could. My mother worked. This usually gave me several hours after school to wear all those beautiful things I loved so much. When she worked on Saturday, I would spend the entire day dressed in her clothes. I can remember my mother getting mad at me for getting into her clothes and making a mess of how they were arranged, but never did she say, "Don't wear girls' clothes." She even caught me in bed in a night gown once.

I got older and moved away from home. I did not crossdress totally but frequently would wear a night gown or slip around the house. Marriage and three children did not stop the urge to crossdress. I spent precious moments alone wearing my wife's clothes. 24 years of marriage and I was never caught. Oh, it got close a few times, but I was never caught. I dropped a few hints during those years, like appearing in her night gown and a robe. She would laugh, criticize me, and tell me to change, and I did.

The reason I tell my life's story is: It is probably similar to many others' experiences. All during the time I was dressing I would look in the mirror and see a little girl, a young girl, a young woman, or an adult woman looking back. The love for what I felt at those times was there. I truly felt like a woman.

Then reality set in. The fear of being caught gripped me. I felt guilty for dressing and didn't know why I felt so much guilt. I imagined the shame I would feel if caught. I would take off the clothes immediately and swear I would never dress again. You know what happened. It's likely it happened to you much the same way. I didn't put the clothes back on.... until the next time.... The cycle would repeat.... dress, feel guilt, purge, let the pressure build up again.... dress.... etc.

24 years of marriage and I was never caught....

The same thoughts went through my head each time I dressed. Panic was destroying me mentally. The womanness inside me wanted to live and I was refusing to deal with the thought that there was womanness in me. I could not understand why I felt as I felt. Every time an emotional situation would come up, I would run from it rather than show any

womanly emotions. My insides were literally in constant turmoil. I made myself sick physically and mentally denying who, what, and how I am.

I started looking for literature on crossdressing. Libraries have very little information available. Most of it deals with the sexual hang up and is of no relevance to me. Other books were fantasy or pure pornography. I finally discovered the address of Tri-Ess in a Penthouse magazine. I wrote a short note... scared to death. The reply I got was what I had been wanting. I joined Tri-Ess that month, and also ETVC, a support group in the San Francisco Bay Area.

When they slipped that dress over my head, I was hooked again...

As I said, I was having a difficult time dealing with my feelings. I needed to talk with someone. Who could be better than a loving spouse when I needed to talk, I thought. I also knew it might be divorce time, too. My personal well being became important enough to risk the worst. When the time came to tell her, we sat down and I told her like it is. It was the most difficult thing I have ever done. I am glad I finally did tell her. It was a huge weight off of my shoulders. I was no longer playing Atlas and holding up the world.

My wife has said I am very different now. She says even the kids have noticed Dad is more relaxed, patient and easier to get along with now. My wife has accepted my being a crossdresser. She does not like it. She does not encourage me. But she does not condemn me either. Sometimes she even buys items she thinks I might like...

I hope what I've written will help someone. I've gone through hell like everyone else who has come to deal with the womanness inside. I have finally been able to live with myself, not just my boy self, not just my girl self, but as one.... a complete human being. I've learned it is not bad to feel like a woman, it is alright to experience emotion and to show it. It's alright to cry. It's alright to like soft pretty clothes. If you let the woman inside become part of your life, your total life and personality, I guarantee she will not disappoint you ever... because she is YOU.

This is not THE END.... Each day, I realize more and more of what I am. To borrow a phrases from a friend: I am a "male heterosexual woman", and I love what I am.

Janette (CA-2880-C)

FYI

Seen while scanning the Smithsonian: An article by Secretary Adams, examining a new Smithsonian exhibit looking at the opportunities and rewards for both genders in American life.

Adams quotes from the exhibit entitled: Men and Women: A History of Costume, Gender and Power. "Its basic thrust is to distinguish 'sex', meaning the biological natures we are born with, from 'gender', meaning the characteristics that we take on as we learn to be 'masculine' or 'feminine' as our society defines these ideas". Further, the focus is "on the historical plasticity of American notions of gender."

The developmental patterns of clothing and its linkage to social elements, particularly "gender", is traced superficially. Somewhat before the beginning of the 20th Century, anything at all "feminine" was purged from the clothing young males were given to wear. Previously, young females' and young males' clothing had been virtually indistinguishable. The rise of the aggressive and macho image for young males was reflected in the idols of the day such as Teddy Roosevelt and his "Roughriders". A new ideal stressing physical prowess and fierce independence arose and attached itself to males, particularly in their dominance over and control of the bodies of females.

About this time the powerful stereotyping we see today began to emerge with clearly drawn lines between males and females, in terms of clothing. People were identified not only as to sex, but as to standing in the community according to the stereotypes developed and manifest in clothing. This must have been the beginnings of the "Dress for Success" notions we encounter today.

According to Curator Barbara Clark Smith, the creator of the exhibit, "gender differences in opportunities and rewards, even more fundamentally in social, cultural, political and economic power undergird the contrasting sets of rules for appearance and behavior."

If you are in the DC area and can visit the exhibit, you'll get a first hand introduction to this serious work which indicates a very real awakening of interest across a wide spectrum of intelligent people. Such serious and informative exhibitions as this are an invaluable aid to our understanding, and to our being understood...
Ed

Letters to the Editor

Dear Jaye,

I just received the Winter 1989 edition of The Femme Mirror. It's nice to have some communication again with Tri Ess. I was disappointed to see there was no listing of the chapters of Tri Ess. I would very much like to see a listing of chapters and their mailing addresses in every issue of The Femme Mirror. I think a listing of the names and mailing addresses of each committee chairperson (i.e. Membership, Chapter, Editor of the Mirror, Editor of the Directory, and Editor of the Buyer's Guide, etc.) should be included as well.

You asked for input from the membership, but you don't tell us to whom to write. Also, I think the procedure and mailing addresses we all need to write individual members should be included. I really do think this would help the Sorority.

Can you get someone to send me applications to join Tri Ess? I will do my best to get Tri Ess some new members. Also, would you send me a list of the chairpersons of each committee, their names and mailing addresses? Florida is a big state. We want you to know we're here, too.

Have you ever thought about putting out a monthly newsletter in addition to The Femme Mirror? Many of us wonder if Tri Ess is still in business when we go so long with no communication. The monthly newsletter for our group has, I believe, been very much responsible for our continued growth and good health.

Another thing, is the Clarion still being issued? I haven't received a copy in quite a while. Would you put me back on the mailing list if we are not on currently? If it's not being issued, what newsletter is being issued for chapter leaders?

I've devoted the rest of my life to helping the crossdressing community. If I could afford it I would be at the national meetings and conventions. Maybe I'll be able to afford that sometime in the future. In any event, I'll do whatever I can to help our community. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to help. We have a fine group here in Florida. We want to make it better and to help the rest of the world understand us better.

Sincerely,

Dale [REDACTED]
11 Westchester Dr.
Kissimmee, FL 34744

Staff of *The Femme Mirror*,

Would like to complement the staff of *The Femme Mirror* for the great job they are doing. It is a real big improvement over the previous issues and is being issued on a timely basis. I am sure the improved *Femme Mirror* will go a long way toward keeping sisters in the group. I am sure there were many who dropped their membership due to the lack of the magazine etc. I had come close many times and only held on as I am also a member of the CDM and they have a good library and newsletter. If I dropped my TriEss membership, I would have had to drop that. In any case, a super job.

Might comment that in a small way I can sympathize with Irene and her problems. I came very close to having a very similar situation. Fortunately for a number of things I came away with only a \$300.00 bill for psychiatric sessions and a good scare. After the sessions, the charge was dropped.

When I get a little time, I will do a "bio" on Andria if you would like that sort of thing for the magazine.

Love,

Andria (VA-1304-M)

Dear Jeanette,

I received my membership in Tri-Ess and copies of the *Femme Mirror* yesterday morning.

My heartfelt compliments to your and your staff for an excellent publication. My wife and I both found it to be informative and enlightening.

Neither of us has any hang-up about my crossdressing. We both especially liked "Dancing the TV Two Step" by Donna.

I'm looking forward to a long and enjoyable relationship with Tri-Ess and anticipate the next issue of the *Femme Mirror*.

Yours in Sisterhood,

Michelle (FL-2978-K)

Dear Sisters & Editor,

I've been wanting to write to you for ever so long and as I see you are asking for more, I thought maybe I could get on the band wagon.

I love every issue of the Femme Mirror, especially the one when lo and behold my very nicest sister Linda was on the cover. As soon as I opened it at the mail box, I recognized her and had a lot of joy in seeing her. As I have many pictures she has sent to me, all gorgeous, I wasn't surprised. She always writes such nice witty letters each time, too.

I wish to congratulate all the girls who produce the Femme Mirror. Don't ever change the name of it, it's perfect.

As for me, I was so fascinated by Kathy Ann's letter and picture. What a wonderful experience with her wife! Although Jane Teske and her letters in Tapesiry and to me is wonderful and consoling, my wife has given me only minor freedom and it would be a dream come true working together on makeup, hair, and photography. It was such a fantasy to just think about it. Heaven knows, and as the pictures show, I can use make up help.

I'm sending pictures taken at one of our Delta Chi parties (banquet) at a large and beautiful Holiday Inn just outside Washington, DC.

Due to many people helping we have been growing at about 5 to 6 members a month and such an enjoyable time is had by all with our activities.

Please, all crossdresser's wives, girl friends, and others around this area, write to me about our meetings. Fun is had by all and you get to meet so many nice people. I've been in membership for 2 years (assistant treasurer) and have never regretted it.

This year my utmost desire is to attend Fantasia Fair in Provincetown, Mass. It would be a dream come true.

Love to all

Nancy [REDACTED]
MD-2655-B

Ed. Note: Thank you for writing, and keep up the good work!!!

Dear Editor

March 11, 1990

I am writing concerning the recent article in *The Femme Mirror* titled: "Woman's Place Is In Tri-Ess".

Let me start by asking the question: "Why would we want to turn away the very people who can help us the most?"

Tri-Ess is an organization to assist heterosexual transvestites with the problems we face. The problems are not ours alone. When we become involved with a female, which we will do because we are heterosexual, the problems also become her problems. The overall relationship can best be served by assisting both partners. Who better can address the female side than a female who has experienced the same situation?

Kay made many good points as to ways females could be helpful to the organization. Our constitution contains provisions to remove any member for "activities against the best interests of Tri-Ess Sorority". I believe the females who would seek membership, would wish to help us not destroy the efforts of others. She would not be willing to devote the time it would require to accomplish that goal.

I have never been fortunate enough to have a spouse to give me real support. I can only read articles such as this one and hope someday I will meet a female with the capacity to offer such understanding.

We are all looking for acceptance. Acceptance by friends with the same feelings we have is one thing. Acceptance by the one you love is on a higher level.

Most of the activities of our Sorority are aimed at our feminine side. Yet there is another side to our overall being: our masculine side. We need these understanding females for our overall well being and to help us with our relationships!

Sincerely,

Leslie (TX-2801-H)

Well said, Leslie! Ed.

Dear Jaye,

Yes, I can certainly sympathize about the misuse of the Queen's English. As a professional wordsmith, you have no idea how painful it is for me to have to work around all those freshly-minted journalism grads who can't put together two grammatically correct sentences. But I've always felt rules are made of rubber; you can bend 'em, but not break 'em. First you've got to know what the rules are! I've always made it a habit to use words carefully, but since most of what I write is intended for the ear, not the eye, I tend to write things the way I want them to sound. Generally this means using colloquial conversational English instead of purely correct structure. The occasional dangling participle is my one vice.

I hope my little dialog doesn't cause you too much trouble. Kathy is always complaining her computer is trying to fight her when she tries to enter my stuff. The machine wants to correct all my mangled punctuation and custom-built sentences and words. Well, my style never has been "traditional" and I've driven more than a few editors and English professors to drink.

I continue to hear grumbling and moaning from people about how late the *MIRROR* always is, and they moan a lot about the fact they don't seem to get anything for their money. I wonder if many of them have ever given any thought to the fact most of the people working on these projects do so on their own time, sometimes at their own expense, and without ANY compensation. I've long since given up counting the hours I spend here at the typewriter working on newsletters and articles, only to have people complain that the newsletters are (a) late, (b) not long enough, yet (c) cost too much to mail. I don't do all this with any thought of compensation.... that comes from other sources. But I am getting a little tired of the Do-Nothings complaining about the efforts of those who DO do all the work.

Frustrating, isn't it? I was going through my records the other day (tax time again...hurrah), and I figured up approximately what Tri-Ess and this chapter have cost ME during the past year.... 14 trips to Albuquerque for chapter meetings, four trips to Denver for Delta meetings or GIC functions, one trip to Houston, three to Phoenix, one to San Diego, the Holiday En Femme (registration and travel), the

newsletters I've paid for out of MY pocket when the treasury was depleted), and long-distance calls on chapter business (every call I make from here is long distance) and I came up with a figure close to \$2600.00. I still haven't figured into the formula the cost of the Holiday video. My best guess is around \$500.00 out of pocket for studio time, tapes, postage, and mailing envelopes. This doesn't count travel to the Holiday, and doesn't count my labor (50+ hours). Yet some folks are complaining I'm charging \$25.00 for the video. Bootleg copies are already turning up and I'm still about \$250.00 short of breaking even. I don't expect to make any money on the video, just wanted to break even at best. I probably won't be doing another one. I'll just take a few days off and go skiing. Somehow that always seems to take the edge off my anxieties and frustrations!

I presume by now you've read the editorial Merissa Lynn wrote in *TAPESTRY* in support of Tri-Ess. I'm fast developing a new measure of respect for that gal. We have planned a little ski trip up in N.H. when I go there in March for the IFGE conference. I'm looking forward to the chance to have some real heart to heart talks. I think we've given a lot of people some real reasons to stop criticizing us just because we make an easy target. As long as we set principles and standards and **STICK TO THEM OURSELVES**, we'll do well. The more people I meet from some of the other groups, the more I'm convinced we are the ones who are going to make a difference.... I just can't picture some of these folks as spokespersons for us. No wonder the general public is convinced we're all freaks, considering some of the people who purport to speak for us.

I used to do a lot of PR for the Marines. The biggest obstacle to getting a balanced picture was convincing people to ignore the Hollywood stereotypes of the John Wayne, brawling, boozing, half-educated ground-pounder. I didn't say that wasn't always the case. But that's the image people want to stick to. We've got the same PR problem. People want us to be freaks and perverts because that's the image they have. Re-thinking the image means actually having to think. That's too much work! We need to be more conscious of the image we're presenting to the public and the media. There are a lot of unqualified nuts running around out there, grabbing a lot of media exposure, and people just naturally assume they are speaking for all of us. The noisy few are the ones who are shaping the public's impression of us. We've got to start countering with something more positive. I don't suppose there's anything we can do to prevent

these oddballs from grabbing the media's attention.... would be nice if we could, but it's a free country. We can certainly start making an effort to present the public with a better image. We need to start identifying the people who can best present and represent us, and see to it they have every possible chance to do so.

Well, this is all there is to my soapbox this time. I don't have a clue why I suddenly started spouting off. I must be frustrated by the lack of decent skiing so far this year. I have to find another activity to take the edge off. Maybe I'll take up knitting or something else not dependent on the weather!

I'll finish this and get to work on laundry.... always a thrilling experience. I can't begin to explain the emotional satisfaction I get sorting unmentionables on an existentialist level..

Donna Mobley

Dear Editor:

The Winter Mirror was great. I wish there were more of it. The personal experiences are of help to all who have not had to undergo some of the most feared things a crossdresser can experience.

I felt compelled to comment on the letter to the editor by Barbara Renee James (MO-1734-J). I must compliment the lady for her confidence when en femme and in public, especially when in contact with a police officer. (I'm sorry you got the ticket, though.)

First let me say I speak from experience. I wear a Bra and I wear a Badge. The Bra is for my well being. The badge is for the State of California, for the last 24 years.

I totally agree with what Barbara had to say. Police officers are generally highly professional people. As long as you don't try to snow them with BS, you should have very little problem. Be up front, honest, and act like the lady you are. The thing that makes a police officer good at what he or she does is curiosity. If you go places a woman would not normally go, you can bet an officer's curiosity would be aroused. The questions that may follow could be embarrassing. If the answers are not satisfactory, more problems could be caused. If you should be arrested the next stop would be the city or county jail. If you were put into the general population in jail, you can imagine what could happen. Think the very worst!

The idea of filing a picture and profile with the local police agency is as Barbara stated: "BUNK". Just because we do not dress as society says we should dress does not put us in the same area as those sex offenders who are required to register.

What I am saying is: Go out there, enjoy, think and act like the lady you are! If you appear harmless, you will be treated exactly that way. The answer Barbara gave was simple, honest and straight forward. It left no question as to who and what she was. The officer with any experience has stopped all kinds of people. He or she has a job to do and couldn't really care less if you just happen to be in a dress. The ticket is just another stat to put into the daily report.

I would like to ask any other officers who are sisters to comment on this subject. This is a great way to help all to become more confident with their femme selves when doing daily activities.

Look out, all you California Ladies. When you are stopped by a CHP, it just might be ME! Just a comment, though, please don't ask because there are about 5000 of us.....

Janette (CA-2880-C)

Ed Note: This is an area of concern to many sisters. Let's all hope, when we encounter a police officer, we encounter a truly professional one.....



Dear Jeanette,

I just received the Winter 1989 issue of the Mirror and I would like to congratulate you and your staff on a job well done.

However, I was mis-quoted by Carol Beecroft in her column. I believe that my exact words were: "I'll tread very lightly in the next few weeks."

To be sure, we should be careful when we appear in public, if only to refrain from attracting needless attention and embarrassing scrutiny. But, I never made such a statement in the note that I enclosed with the newsclipping. Neither did I ever say: "You could be picked up if you don't look too good, and be accused of some crime, even though you are innocent." These are Carol Beecroft's words, not mine.

Although St. Petersburg isn't the most progressive city in the country, the social climate for crossdressers here is one of a laid back apathy towards anything that's out of the main stream of life.

Many of our local sisters regularly appear in public and are (quite happily) ignored. I agree with Barbara Renee James that the law enforcement community has more important things to do than hassle me because I'm wearing a dress. I'm probably viewed as the most harmless, benign thing ever to come down the police pike.

It is unfortunate that such a heinous crime was committed by a person who happened to be crossdressed at the time, but I can assure all of you that this event would have been just as thoroughly covered by the St. Pete Times if the perpetrator had been wearing a clown suit.

I would greatly appreciate it if the Mirror would print this letter in its entirety to 1) clarify the fact that I did not make those statements and, 2) assure incoming members that a climate of fear does not exist in the Tampa Bay area.

Your sister,

Michelle [REDACTED]
FL 2978 K

Michelle: We are glad things in St Petersburg are not as bad as they sounded. Thanks for writing to set the record straight.

Chapters and Forming Groups

(Continued from page 30)

Washington, DC	Cathi DC 2075 M Gloria Ann MD 1474 W
Jacksonville, FL	Stephanie FL 2447 R Stephanie FL 2581 M
Pensacola, FL	Joan FL 2520 B
St. Petersburg, FL	Samantha FL 2402 D
Moscow, Idaho	Laurie ID 1704 W
Topeka, KS	Vicky KS 1742 K
Wichita, KS	Julie KS 2294 K
Baltimore, MD	Diane MD 2633 P
Minneapolis, MN	Salli MN 1560 B
St. Louis, MO	Rani MO 1693 D
Niagra Falls, NY	Joan NY 2354 C
Toledo, OH	Joyce OH 1449 B Ronda OH 2499 M
Eugene, OR	Debra Kim OR 1731 K
Gouldsboro, PA	Sue PA 2164 C
Florence, SC	Julie NC 2241 A
Memphis, TN	Tomaslina TN 2198 H
Knoxville, TN	Lori TN 2402 M
Amarillo, TX	Sally TX 2831 F
Richmond, VA	Christina VA 2250 S
Charleston, WV	Alona WV 1730 M
Montreal, Canada	Yvette FC PQ 2168 D
So. British Col. Canada	Dana FCBC 1929 H

Gals.... if we are in error or have left you out.... advise the editorial staff care of: JR Consulting, 402 Hildred, Conroe, TX 77301. We'll update our data file so we'll be better informed next time....
Thanx.... Jaye

Dear Carol,

I will be sending you my profile as soon as I can. When I sent the photos off to be developed I did not realize that it was going to take three to four weeks to develop black and white pictures. I wanted to get my membership, dues, and pledge to you so I can go ahead and join the Chi Chapter of Tri-Ess.

In the last two months, attending their functions and meeting people that have the same thing in common with me has afforded me the greatest few nights in my life. My ex-wife, Joy, has been very helpful in my attending these meetings, much to my surprise. My dressing was one of the reasons for our divorce. Since then she has really been trying to be a real help mate. I even think that some day we may get things worked out and get back together. Also since going to Chicago, I have recently told my 19 year old daughter about Danni. She probably surprised Joy as much as me in the manner that she took my confession. She has even seen Danni already and was impressed somewhat with my appearance. So all things considered to date, everything that has come from the Chi Chapter has been very rewarding.

I want to thank you for your work and dedication to our cause. I have seen you on T.V. on two different occasions and was enlightened in numerous ways both times. People like you have made it easier for people like me. Again, I want to thank you, and as soon as I get my pictures back I will be sending my profile.

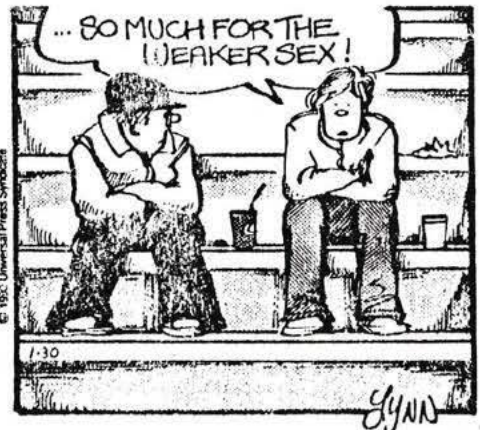
A sister always,

Danni

Danni,

Thanks for those kind words. We certainly hope you and Joy do get back together.
..... Ed.

For Better or Worse



Dear Jaye

The latest *FEMME MIRROR* was great, and shows a lot of time and effort was expended to produce it. Since I am also "computer oriented," I do all my Tri-Ess work in that manner. If it weren't for my computer I would be absolutely buried in membership material. (How did we ever exist with only manual typewriters?) I did, however, receive a few adverse comments about the "Coming Out" submission by Bobbie Lee. Although I have no personal objection, taking the material as a "fantasy" as presented, it appears a few members did. I do not present this as a criticism (or necessarily as a suggestion for a future change in content of the newsletter), but only as an observation that the general Tri-Ess membership is essentially just out of the "closet" and is very sensitive regarding newsletter material concerning homosexuality, transsexualism, domination, etc. Our readers may be over-sensitive, but perhaps you might give thought to those concerns regarding future published material. According to our contemporaries in the crossdressing community, Tri-Ess is "stratght-laced" but this is what the majority of our members is comfortable with.

I hope this will be of help.

Regards,

Donna Martin CA-1148-S

Donna,

Of course you are right. Great care is necessary in selecting material to print. However, there has to be some room for growth for the newly emerged butterflies. I saw in Bobbie's piece two important things..... first the emotional release of humor and secondly a great lesson: Don't do anything STUPID..... Ed.

Dear Editor

March 9, 1990

I have been giving the last issue of *The Femme Mirror* a thorough examination. Although you and your staff are doing an excellent job, and we know everything is going up in price all the time, I think it would be a good idea to find out how much a new Directory would cost per person and then have a vote as to how many would be willing to pay an added expense every year or every other year for a new Directory or Supplements of the Directory plus the membership dues. I am unemployed but I know I'd be willing to pay about \$10.00 extra a year for the Directory. If someone new joined perhaps they could get the next year's new one when it comes out or a last year's Directory if any would be left over.

Sincerely Your Sister,
Lynda (MN-1875-Z)

Lynda.... your suggestions have been forwarded to the Tri-Ess Board of Directors for consideration. The Directory is indeed very important to many of our members and we at the Mirror are well aware of the interest members have in it. The Directory continues to be published by Tri-Ess Central Office while the Mirror is done in Houston by members of Tau Chi Chapter. We volunteered to assume responsibility for the Mirror to do our part in the Sorority by taking an ACTIVE part. Perhaps some other chapter or group would volunteer to do the Directory and take some of the work load off the faithful few laboring under an overload in the central office. We'd like to see this too..... Ed...

Dear Jeanette,

March 7, 1990

I wish to echo the complaint of Donna (of Georgia), in the Fall 1989 *Femme Mirror* letters section.

As a member of Tri-Ess for quite a few years, I too am disappointed that there is not a current, annual listing of *all* the membership, with their age, interests, etc. Initially, the complete listing should include photographs of those who so wish, with perhaps a referral in future listings, to save space. A much smaller, more compact type-face would enable a complete listing in a compact volume.

For me, the Directory listing is *the* single most important service that the Tri-Ess Sorority can

offer; without a listing, I am not certain that is really worth my annual dues, and I have considered dropping my membership: I truly hope that this situation will be rectified.

Sincerely,

Marjorie (WA-1478-L)

Dear Sister,

I read you would like one of our members to keep the Tri-Ess Directory up to date with past and current photos/biographies, and distribute them on a regular basis. Well, I am volunteering for the job.

I am currently a MIS Director in the manufacturing sector who has also been a Personal Computer Specialist in the health care industry and at the retail level. Needless to say, my knowledge of computers and most major software is extensive. I would not have any problems computerizing the directory into a database along with the photos.

If I can be of any assistance, please let me know.

Laura [REDACTED] (IL-1845-L)

Laura,

Your response is heartwarming. It has already been passed on to those with the power to make it happen! Thanx... Ed.

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Richard F. Docter, Ph.D.

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or order from Tri Ess, Outreach Institute, or Plenum Press

AN OPEN LETTER

TO: The Editor, FEMME MIRROR:

In the Winter 1989 issue of the FEMME MIRROR an article appeared entitled "Woman's Place Is In Tri-Ess" appeared under my byline. While the ideas used as a basis for the article were mine, very little of my original text was used and extensive rewriting was done by a member of the MIRROR staff.

I was encouraged to submit "A Woman's Place..." to the MIRROR because it contained important points concerning the role and active participation of genetic females within Tri-Ess; and of the utmost importance that these ideas be expressed to other wives and partners by a GENETIC FEMALE.

The text of the MIRROR article clearly indicates it was written by a MALE. What was printed in the MIRROR was what a genetic male "THOUGHT" a genetic female needed to say from a MALE point of view, its format directed at males not females. By expressing my ideas in a male perspective the whole intent of the article is changed and its original purpose lost.

In addition, incorrect implications are made as to how I view the positions held by portions of the male Tri-Ess membership concerning the active participation of genetic females. In the original copy the word "chauvinistically" never appears, nor is it even alluded to. Since it was my byline which appeared it is also my reputation which is ultimately affected by your writer's interpretation and choice of words.

When the decision was made that such extensive rewriting was needed, for whatever reason, I should have been contacted to do the rewrite or at least been given the courtesy of approving the final copy. I have been a published author since the age of 18 and I am familiar with working with publishers and editors. I consider what was done to my work, no matter how well intentioned, to be unprofessional.

In the March 1990 issue of the FIESTA I am being allowed to print the article as it would have been resubmitted to the MIRROR had I been allowed to edit it myself. I have essentially eliminated the same material the MIRROR chose to eliminate. HOWEVER, what remains is an article which reflects MY original intent and purpose, not that of your writer.

Shirley Kay (formerly Kay)

Ed. Note: Oops!!! What can we say? We are very sorry that in our rush to publish your vitally important article, we did the rewrite ourselves and failed to clear it with you. We promise, it won't ever happen!!!

Dear Editor:

I'm a brand new member of Tri-Ess, although I've been cross dressing for the last twenty five years. I just received my initial materials including three issues of Femme Mirror. You're doing a great job - good to see the improved production value in each issue.

I'm writing with a question that maybe others in the sorority can answer. As a runner and swimmer my legs are my most convincing femme feature - in fact my wife envies them. I enjoy keeping them shaved so they look good, and for the last two years I have even shaved during the summer months.

I agree that most people are remarkably unobservant and don't notice, but for the first time this last summer I got direct questions (both times from my sisters) about whether I shaved my legs. Although I have a "cover story", it's a pretty lame one, and I'm sure my sisters didn't really buy it.

I know others in the sorority must have been faced with the same questions at times, and I'm interested if anyone out there has a plausible "cover". I don't want to stop shaving my legs during shorts season, but if I get many more questions I may have to. I've even thought of becoming a serious biker or tri-athlete since they often shave all their hair. What a marketing idea that would be: Cross dress your way into the best shape of your life.

Sincerely,

Sharon (IL- 2966-B

Ed. Note: OK, ladies. Let's hear your "cover stories".



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A Man

*If I could only say I were just a man,
Not subject to the terrible thoughts I sometimes have.
I wish I could only say I were just a man.
If that were true, I'd need not fear discovery
Of what I really am.*

*I suppose I could at least say I am a biological male.
I can say I appear as a male to most I meet.
But what is inside me is certainly not what you see
In a man's mind.
A man would never think such things.*

*What are these terrible things you think of, pray tell?
Tell me, for I have a need to know.
I will tell you, but you have to promise me,
Promise me not tell another living soul. Do you?*

*Do you completely understand? What I tell you
Must remain a secret to one and all.
All right then. You see, I am not what I appear to be.
I am much different than most people see.*

*I have tasted the forbidden fruit,
And I have opened Pandora's Box,
And I have felt what women feel,
And I have affected their manner of dress,
And I have even been in public dressed as a woman,
You see!*

*Wait, where are you going?
I have much more to tell you about me.
"GET AWAY FROM ME, FAG, HOMO, QUEER! YOU OFFEND ME!"*

*I knew it would happen. I should have never told a soul.
Now, everyone will know, I am lower than the low.
I'm not really what everyone thinks.*

*It is not gay that I am. No, not at all.
I am only TRANSVESTIC in nature, you see.
But, no one will ask what a TRANSVESTITE might be.
They just think I'm gay, and now gay is all that
I'll ever be. No one will ever understand me.*

*Oh, if I could say that I were just a man,
I am a man who likes to dress as a woman.
That is the only true essence of me.*

--Bob M.--

ATTENTION PLEASE

Spring 1990

Dear Tri-Ess Sister,

As you may be aware, in November of 1989 Tri-Ess gave to the wives and partners of its members the option to become full participating members, with the same privileges as other Tri-Ess sisters. We do encourage all wives to take advantage of this offer to join The Society for the Second Self. This will give them an excellent opportunity to network and communicate with other wives, regardless of their attitudes toward crossdressing.

Single membership dues are \$35.00 per year; couples dues are \$50.00 per year. All Tri-Ess dues should be paid directly to the Tri-Ess National Membership Director, Donna Martin, as follows:

Donna Martin
P.O. Box 245
West Covina, CA 91793

If your wife wishes to join Tri-Ess and would like to be listed in the Tri-Ess Wives and Partners Directory, she should send her additional \$15.00 dues to the National Membership Director and her photo (optional) and a brief personal profile (125 words or less) detailing her interests, hobbies, attitude toward crossdressing, etc., to:

Shirley Kay
P.O. Box 1842
Farmington, NM 87499

Shirley Kay is the wife of a Tri-Ess member, a founding member of New Mexico's Fiesta Chapter, and a member of the Tri-Ess Board of Directors. At the recent meeting of the Board of Directors at the IFGE convention in Boston, Shirley was appointed Director for Wives and Partners Concerns. She will produce the Wives and Partners Membership Directory and operate a Mail Forwarding Service. She also hopes to publish a wives and partners newsletter. This will be the first national newsletter devoted to wives and partners concerns, so please help Shirley make it a good one by sending your letters, articles, cartoons, photos and other materials for the newsletter directly to her at the address given above.

Here are the Tri-Ess membership categories once again:

Single	\$35.00 per year
Couple	\$50.00 per year
Associates*	\$35.00 per year
Life Member (single)	\$500.00 one time fee
Life Member (couple)	\$700.00 one time fee

Elsewhere in this issue of the Mirror, Executive Director Carol Beecroft reports that a new Tri-Ess Membership Directory is now being compiled. All sisters with membership numbers of 2800 or below must submit new photos and profiles at this time. So let's get those new pictures and profiles in, ladies, for both Directories. The Directories are for you, the members, and it's up to you to participate.

Your sister,

Jane Ellen Fairfax
Interim Chairman
Tri-Ess Board of Directors

* The Associate membership category (now to be known as "Friends of Tri-Ess") has not yet been fully defined by the Board of Directors, but will include vendors and others not eligible for regular membership in Tri-Ess.



BOOK REVIEW....

by Jeanette J. [REDACTED]

TRANSFORMATIONS

Crossdressers and Those Who Love Them

"One picture is worth a thousand words." Old Chinese Proverb.....

"One touch is worth a thousand pictures." Ronnie Milsap from *Stranger Things Have Happened*.

Transformations-- Crossdressers and Those Who Love Them touched me deeply.

Mariette Pathy Allen is well known within the cross dressing community. Her photographs have been seen on television, in art museums in the United States and abroad, and also on the covers of *Tapestry* magazine. Transformations is the culmination of twelve years of her interaction with crossdressers, their families and friends.

The book is 160 pages of color and black and white photographs with accompanying stories of individual crossdressers. Mariette's formal training in art shows throughout the book. Beyond the technical abilities of a photographer, she shows an artist's eye for composition and the use of shadows. An empathy is evident in the photographs and writing and shows Mariette not only loves her work but also her subjects.

Retail price of Transformations is \$24.95. Most major book chains are carrying the book in their gift book section. If it can not be found at your local book shop, you can order it from IFGE, Box 367, Wayland, MA 01778. Be sure to add: \$2.50 for postage and handling.... It's worth every cent of it!!!!



Dee: "I played baseball as a kid, but if a girl walked by who was really dressed up nice, my mind would wander off and I'd run home to dress up."



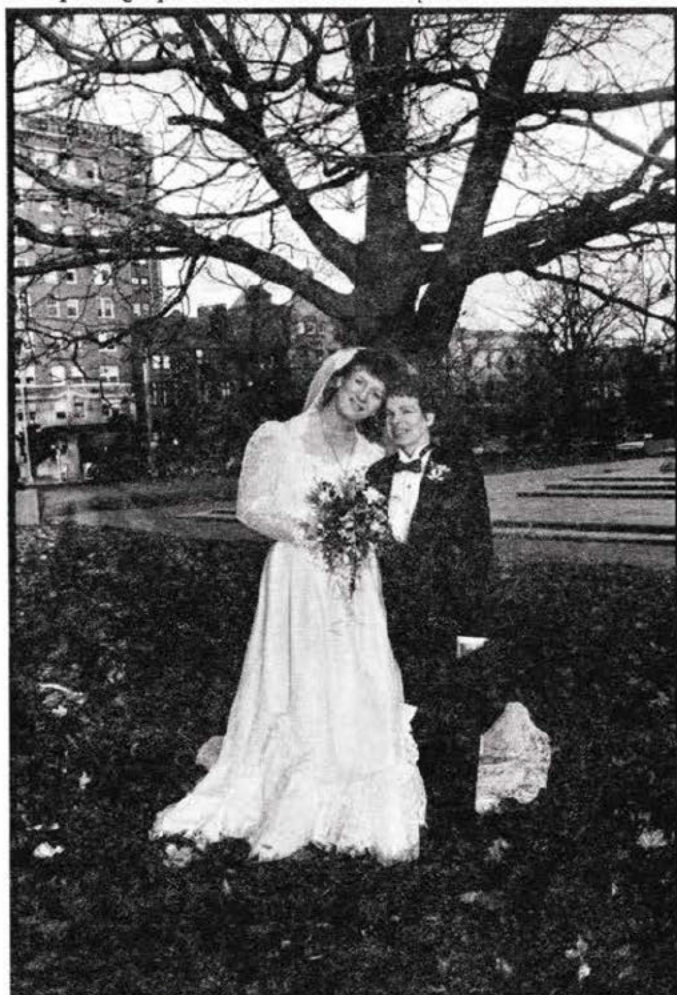
Felicity: This is one of the more touching photographs. It shows Felicity at age 79 and in the background at age 5 1/2. As was customary in the early 1900's young boys wore their hair in a short bob. Before cutting his hair in June 1911, his mother dressed him in the clothes of a neighbor girl and had his father take a picture. Seven years later, Felicity came across the picture which revived his memory of the event and kindled an irresistible desire to cross dress.



Davida: Davida and mate, Corrine.



Allison: This photograph shows beautiful composition with a touch of humor.



Renee and Kevin: Renee: "We were in love with each other, and it didn't matter what clothes I wore."